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Integrated Management Information System project

Twelfth progress report of the Secretary-General

Summary

With the successful implementation of payroll in September 2000 in Headquarters, and the implementation of additional functionalities over the past 12 months, the development phase of the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) as per the initial plan is completed. Over the past 12 months, the implementation of the finance applications at offices away from Headquarters has progressed with the successful installation of that application at the United Nations Office at Geneva, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Economic Commission for Africa. The usage of the system has increased at all duty stations, as far as both the on-line system, with more than 500 users a day on average, and the reporting system are concerned, with more than 370 accesses per day on average.

Improvements to the system, aiming at better meeting of the needs of offices away from Headquarters and reducing manual entries, have been introduced in various areas of operations of IMIS. Major efforts have been made to strengthen the training facilities, through making available on line all the current training courses, improving the access to the desk procedures and organizing of an ongoing training programme for end-users.

An agreement has been reached in principle for the establishment of an IMIS common service for the long-term operation of the system, in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Office for Project Services. As recommended by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, IMIS Service is progressively being integrated into the Information and Technology Services Division of the OCSS. The maintenance of the system continues to be made by the United Nations exclusively and, as planned, the main contractor has been progressively pha ed out and ceased all activities by the end of

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October 2000. While some delays have been encountered in the implementation of the system, the overall projected expenditures remain within the approved budget. Efforts continue to complete the implementation of the system at offices away from Headquarters taking into account local constraints and financial reporting requirements.

While the present progress report still refers to the high volume of activities undertaken during the past 12 months, it is planned that the next report will concentrate, mainly on lessons learned and on future developments. Seven years after the implementation of the human resources applications, IMIS still remains the only fully integrated system available to United Nations system organizations, meeting their specific requirements in most of their administrative needs, in personnel management, payroll, accounting, purchasing, travel and treasury. The IMIS team, while still assisting local offices in the implementation of the system, is reviewing, in consultation with the users, the areas in which to concentrate its efforts for further improvement of the system. Work has already been initiated for upgrading of the technological platform so that IMIS can be made more easily accessible through the World Wide Web. The completion of the project will also enable the United Nations to more easily re-engineer the users' interface. Other major projects to be undertaken by the team include research for a new tool for the reporting application, the issue of consolidation of data, a review of the requirements of peacekeeping missions for the system application and archiving of the IMIS data.

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I. Introduction

1. The purpose of the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS), which was approved by the General Assembly in section XII of its resolution 43/217 of 21 December 1988, is to develop an integrated system for the processing of and reporting on administrative actions at all major duty stations. The main areas covered by the system are personnel management; post management; accounting; procurement; travel, payroll; and budget execution. The Secretary-General has thus far submitted eleven progress reports for the system implementation, the latest of which was submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session (A/54/474).

2. The system is currently installed at the eight major duty stations, namely, New York, Addis Ababa, Bangkok, Beirut, Geneva, Nairobi, Santiago and Vienna. It is also being used by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the International Trade Centre (ITC) and, as far as the human resources application is concerned, by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). The entire system, fully integrated, relies on a set of core functionalities/mechanisms that support its operations, as well the operations of the system at multiple locations. Until the last progress report, reference was made to releases, specifically intended as successive deliveries of parts of the software. With the completion of the delivery of the last components of the system (Release 4 (payroll) and Release 5 (operational components)) and their successful integration, reference to releases has generally been replaced in the present report to references to the functional areas of operation of the system.

II. Status of the project

A. Central controls, operational applications and overall operations

3. The IMIS software is exclusively developed at Headquarters and enhancements of the software are centrally coordinated through the mechanism of the substantive interest groups established as part of the common long-term maintenance with the United Nations funds and programmes using IMIS. New releases of software are centrally controlled and distributed to ensure ease of maintenance and consistent, accurate operations across duty stations.

4. Central controls and mechanisms to support worldwide operations have been developed and implemented over the entire life cycle of the project, but need to be presented in an integrated manner at this point. They include mainly security access to data and transactions, reference tables, workflows (queuing of transactions), account code structure, data consolidation and remote access.

5. The security system has evolved over the development cycle through increased numbers of transactions that can be performed by the authorized users or groups of users. The last upgrade was introduced with payroll implementation, in August 2000.

6. In addition, with a view of increasing accuracy and reducing workload, certain reference tables are centrally maintained and automatically distributed to offices away from Headquarters, UNDP and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Out of approximately 150 tables containing reference data (country names, currencies, vendors, etc.), some 50 tables (including salary scales and exchange rates) are distributed to other offices.

7. The workflow mechanism (the capability to queue documents to another user group for follow-up action) has been enhanced in certain areas, to provide for better information on the assignments being sent, and easier access to the relevant screens where the recipient fulfils the assignment.

8. In order to facilitate the data analysis, the data of the various duty stations have been merged with Headquarters data to create a multi-site reporting database. The database is in an advanced testing stage, during which users will be given access to it to develop reports or perform queries. Analysis is being undertaken to determine the best ways to use the database for accounts-closing activities, as recommended by the Board of Auditors. A strategy for moving further into data consolidation is being developed jointly by the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Account and the IMIS team.

9. Weekly copies of the IMIS and reporting databases of the offices away from Headquarters are

available at Headquarters for consultation and reporting purposes. Direct remote online access to databases in offices away from Headquarters using existing network lines is also available to relevant administrative staff at Headquarters.

10. With the progressive implementation of the system at an increasing number of duty stations, new requirements have arisen with respect to processing of personnel actions on transfer of staff and related data between duty stations, inter-office vouchers and personnel table replications which were part of Release 5. As part of the maintenance of the system, steps are being taken to address these new requirements and to make modifications to the existing software.

11. The IMIS operations support units have been created in the Office of Human Resources Management and the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts to provide help-desk assistance to users worldwide and to generate reports, prepare training material and provide substantive training as appropriate, while the overall training coordination has been taken over by the Office of Human Resources Management.

12. At the completion of the development effort with the introduction of payroll application, the system now comprises 1,100 transaction screens, 5,200 help screens, 4 million lines of code and 900 tables with 14,000 fields. In addition, there are 48,000 web files for desk procedures, 39 hands-on training courses and 14 lecture courses available to system users.

B. Human resources services applications

13. At present, in the human resources functional area, IMIS supports, among others:

(a) Rostering of applicants;

(b) Monitoring of the recruitment process, including job classification;

(c) Processing of all personnel actions required for the management of staff of all categories at all duty stations;

(d) Skills inventory of staff;

(e) Determination of the level of staff benefits after each personnel action, taking into account the contractual situation of a staff member and by applying relevant remuneration scales and entitlements.

14. Personal information on each staff member is maintained in IMIS by means of personnel actions. The average number of personnel actions processed at Headquarters each month has increased from some 3,000 reported in 1999 to some 3,500 at present.

15. The recruitment tracking module supports recruitment processing by allowing the tracking of actions taken for and candidates associated with recruitment requests. It is used for both long-term and short-term recruitment and facilitates the monitoring of the duration of the recruitment process. The module was implemented at Headquarters in July 1999 and at the offices away from Headquarters at the beginning of 2000.

16. A number of enhancements to the human resources functionality have been implemented, with a view to supporting payroll processing. Extensive data verification, both internal to IMIS and between IMIS and the current payroll system and data clean-up, has been undertaken by the Office of Human Resources Management, the executive offices, the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts and the IMIS team to prepare the personnel database for the payroll implementation. This includes all information relating to staff members and their dependants and complete historical data. The output of entitlement calculations is used for payroll computations. In addition to the 13 entitlements already automatically computed before the implementation of payroll, the processing of a new regular personnel action entitlement (for mid-month salary), four entitlements related to repatriation benefits, 24 new entitlements related to separation/termination, five entitlements related to insurance, two entitlements related to rental subsidy and ten entitlements related to time and attendance, have been introduced. A new staff member pay control mechanism has been introduced, to ensure that staff members' entitlements are automatically updated when all changes are introduced into the reference tables or when retroactive changes are made to the staff records.

C. Finance and support services applications

17. IMIS comprises finance and support services applications that are by far the most extensive and complex component of the system. The system supports, among others, budget implementation, funds

control, processing of obligations, payables/receivables inter-office vouchers and disbursements, cash management, accounting, procurement and travel transactions.

18. As indicated in the eleventh progress report, major efforts have been made to support the implementation of the financial application (Release 3) at offices away from Headquarters. A Headquarters team comprising staff from the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts, the IMIS team, Information Technology Services Division, executive offices and the Field Administration and Logistics Division in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations is sent to the duty station for data review, its clean-up and conversions, technical installation of the system, training and post implementation support in preparation of Release 3 implementation. The financial application was implemented at the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the United Nations Office at Vienna in 1999, at the United Nations Office at Geneva in April 2000, at the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in July 2000 and at the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in October 2000. Approximately 500 staff were trained at Geneva, 125 at ECLAC and 200 at ECA. The implementation of the financial application to all those offices was successful and has allowed for standardizing the processes across the Secretariat to the maximum extent possible. The accounts are fully reconciled and monthly closings proceed on schedule. The implementation of Release 3 in two remaining offices, namely, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the United Nations Office at Nairobi, is scheduled for the first half of 2001, so as to ensure that the preparation of the financial statements is not adversely affected. Preparatory work for its installation is already being undertaken at those two duty stations.

19. With the continued implementation of this part of the system at offices away from Headquarters, further improvements have been introduced to the system. These include changes made to education grant processing, to allow for certain payments in non-United States dollar currencies, changes to the financial batch programs, to allow them to be run for groups of funds separately, depending on the need of each duty station responsible for producing its own financial statements. Changes have also been made to provide specific accounting treatment for certain general trust funds and revolving accounts, which have financial reporting cycles that are on an annual, rather than biennial, basis.

20. In parallel, changes are being introduced to improve the processing of inter-office vouchers between duty stations using IMIS and between Headquarters and those offices not yet using the system. These changes aim at reducing the volume of manual processing.

21. A new journal voucher upload facility allowing users to bring information into IMIS with minimal manual data entry was also introduced. This new facility was used extensively in the preparation of consolidation entries at Headquarters with respect to offices away from Headquarters for purpose of closing of the accounts for the first six months of 2000. The processing of electronic funds transfer payments to financial institutions in the host country was introduced in the last quarter of 1999. Work has continued on developing an interface to make electronic funds transfer payments to international financial institutions and is expected to be completed at the end of 2000 or in early 2001.

22. Work has also progressed on replacing the mainframe project management reporting system for technical cooperation projects in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Certain enhancements to the on-line processing of transactions relating to technical cooperation project expenditures have also been introduced, in addition to an improved capability for consolidating and reporting on project personnel and other statistics. The project delivery report used for reporting to UNDP and UNFPA has also been developed in electronic format, in line with the requirements of those agencies.

23. The travel functionality continues to be successfully used in IMIS at all duty stations where Release 3 has been implemented. Several enhancements to the travel functionality were introduced, including the capability to issue lump-sum payments in non-United States dollar currencies.

24. In the area of procurement, over 4,400 requisitions were processed in IMIS at Headquarters in 1999 and some 3,100 purchase orders were issued from those requisitions. The integrated version of IMIS and the procurement software package used by Headquarters was implemented also at the United Nations Office at Geneva and at ECLAC. The other

duty stations use a special version of IMIS to issue purchase orders directly from the system.

25. In sum, during the reporting period (1 September 1999 to 31 August 2000), 268,437 financial documents were processed in IMIS. Of these, 198,000 were processed at Headquarters and 70,437 were processed in the offices away from Headquarters, where Release 3 had been implemented.

D. Payroll and related applications

26. IMIS completely covers the functional areas of payroll, rental subsidy/deductions, personal insurance and staff time and attendance. The on-line Time and Attendance module was implemented at Headquarters in August 1999, and will be implemented at all offices away from Headquarters by the end of 2000. The module was created to record the absences of staff (e.g. annual and sick leave) and overtime assignments data, such as regular and special overtime.

27. Payroll application (Release 4) is fully integrated into the IMIS system and relies to a great degree on reference tables, data and processing logic that already exists within the system. Payroll data is based on human resources, entitlements and financial data. The application processes the retrieved information to arrive at a net pay calculation and then updates the accounting ledgers by posting disbursements and salary expenditures.

28. During 1999, the payroll module underwent a thorough and extensive testing effort. Owing to the sensitive nature of payroll, which needs to address the specific requirements of staff at all duty stations, the testing effort for Release 4 was greater in scope than that undertaken for previous releases.

29. The payroll process in IMIS is composed of eight phases, which underwent five separate extensive testings. In the course of testing, a total of 2,967 test cases attached to 1,484 different business scenarios were created. Each scenario was run multiple times through the payroll code for a total of 3,751 tests. Furthermore, a specific parallel testing of payrolling in IMIS and in the current mainframe system has been undertaken to verify consistency of data. A comparison was done of data of a total of five months (January, February, March, June and September 2000) for the entire Headquarters payroll population (approximately 9,000 staff) between the old payroll system and the IMIS system for that purpose. This parallel testing will be conducted further for the months of October and November 2000.

30. The new payroll functionality was successfully integrated into production at Headquarters in August 2000. The functionality comprises 3,921 files, 253 new screens, 56 new menu items, 813 new help files and 35 data conversions. It was then turned on effective 1 September 2000. Because of the size and complexity of the module, it was decided to introduce payroll processing incrementally and to start with a representative group of staff from Headquarters and from one peacekeeping mission.

31. During September, October and November 2000, four distinct payrolls were successfully run for this target group: two mid-month payrolls for General Service staff, an end-of-the-month payroll for Professional staff located in the field and an end-of-the-month payroll for Headquarters staff. Newly designed payslips were produced, the disbursement lists were sent to the banks and salary payments were made out of IMIS.

32. With the full implementation of Release 4, the current payroll system will be discontinued at Headquarters as of January 2001 for Headquarters staff, but will continue to be used for UNDP and UNICEF staff until July 2001, when Release 4 will be implemented in those two agencies, as scheduled. UNDP and UNICEF have been advised accordingly and have been requested to initiate their own data verification and clean-up. As of that date, the mainframe system will be used for historical reporting.

33. Training in payroll application, comprising five introductory lectures and 43 hands-on classes and covering 12 distinct functional areas of processing, has been undertaken for a total number of 1,615 administrative staff members who are expected to use the application. Eighteen Secretariat staff have been trained to be trainers and to conduct the training sessions for other relevant staff over a 14-week period.

34. Plans are being finalized for the implementation of payroll at offices away from Headquarters. A limited number of staff from those offices will be trained at Headquarters on the new system operation. For testing purposes, payroll will be run at Headquarters on the copies of the local databases and the results will be analysed jointly by the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts, the IMIS team and offices away

from Headquarters. Subsequently, the payroll will be run locally, in parallel with Headquarters, to ensure consistency in the processing and in the results. The implementation date of payroll at these offices will be determined locally in consultation with Headquarters, based on the results of the parallel runs and possible local constraints.

E. Reporting applications

35. During 1999, the IMIS Reporting Facility underwent major enhancements and its usage has remained very high. During the period from May to August 2000, users accessed the reporting application at Headquarters 23,588 times (an average of about 284 times per working day) (see annex I, table 2 for details). In over 82 per cent of that usage, the users generated standard reports, while in some 17 per cent of the usage, users downloaded data for customized reports.

36. In August 2000, a new version of the Reporting Facility was implemented using more up-to-date software. The new version required the recompilation of 355 reports, 220 screens, 307 scripts and testing of all of the components. In August, new payroll reports and insurance reports were also introduced. During the period under review, 36 new reports were delivered and 47 were modified to better meet users' needs (see annex I, table 1 for details).

37. As shown in annex I, tables 2 and 3, the Reporting Facility is extensively used at Headquarters and at other duty stations. The executive offices at Headquarters and the central IMIS support units at offices away from Headquarters provide reports and other information to the management. The most frequently used reports are the expenditure reports and post incumbency reports, which provide essential information for managers in a summary format. For example, on a regular basis, the Office of Human Resources Management generates from IMIS consolidated human resources management reports for heads of all departments and offices. The reports contain the data in their respective areas in comparison with the global situation of the Organization. At ECA, a set of reports is generated by its IMIS unit on a weekly basis for distribution to the ECA senior management.

F. Infrastructure and technical issues

38. The entire production infrastructure at Headquarters was upgraded to meet both the additional payroll processing requirements and to keep it up to date. Two new servers were installed at each office away from Headquarters (three in the case of the United Nations Office at Geneva). Performance measurements are being conducted between Headquarters and ECLAC and Headquarters and peacekeeping missions to size the bandwidth required to support a remote production operation.

39. As indicated in the eleventh progress report, the main objective for the maintenance of the system was be the re-engineering of the users' front end to make the system more user-friendly, in particular in the human resources area, which was first implemented seven years ago, and the porting of the application to the World Wide Web. The system is being ported to the latest versions of the software used to develop the users' interface. Once this project is completed, an automated conversion of IMIS to a full industry standard Web will be undertaken. In parallel, a certain number of tasks are also under way to analyse some functional and technical issues related to the Web operations of IMIS. This exercise will require a full retesting of IMIS and is expected to be completed by the end of 2001.

40. The upgrading of IMIS to the new platform will also facilitate the re-engineering of screens to make the system more user-friendly. Analysis of users' requirements are being conducted within the framework of the IMIS common service so that work can then be undertaken to this effect upon completion of the upgrade.

41. Research is also planned with a view to better integrating IMIS into the new electronic United Nations. With completion of electronic publishing of the desk procedures and with the on-line availability of training material, the work will focus on the designing of electronic forms and individual information forms, such as personnel actions, payslips, claims, that can be available on-line.

G. Training activities

42. In the beginning of 2000, responsibility for ongoing training activities was delegated to the Office

of Human Resources Management and the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts IMIS operations support units, while the Office of Human Resources Management assumed responsibility for coordinating the training. Training in the IMIS application is now part of the central training programme of that Office.

43. Following these arrangements, the Office of Human Resources Management conducted a user survey of IMIS training needs to which more than 370 staff responded. While 80 per cent of the respondents had some training or experience in IMIS already, the remaining 20 per cent of the replies came from staff who had not yet been exposed to IMIS, but who wanted to be trained in the system application. To date, the Office of Human Resources Management has conducted 10 overview classes on IMIS attended by approximately 100 staff. The main purpose of the classes is to provide an overall presentation of the system and to enable the staff to familiarize themselves with the on-line training materials available. The overall training strategy is in fact based on self-training, in view of the high number of subjects and courses available and the specific needs of each user.

44. The survey further indicated a desire among staff for training in administrative policies in general, as well as IMIS training on specific topics. The six topics with the highest number of requests for training were identified as follows: pre-encumbrance, obligations, travel request, funding documents, time and attendance and personnel action processing. A training programme based on the identified needs is being prepared by the Office of Human Resources Management. Relevant functional offices will assist in scheduling classes on those topics during the coming months and, as appropriate, will conduct the classes on the issues of administrative policy and related IMIS procedures. In addition, a specific training programme in application of the IMIS reporting functionality is under preparation. The training database contains material for exercises in all areas of IMIS, including human resources, finance, travel, pre-encumbrance, obligations, entitlements and payroll. The database is used for training in new functionality, namely, end-of-service and payroll, as well as for training for offices away from Headquarters as they implement a new release of IMIS.

45. Four types of training materials to assist users in self-training have been developed: videos, desk procedures, overview documents of the main topics and a training database, with associated training exercises. All these materials, with the exception of videos, are available on-line through the Intranet and are also distributed electronically on a regular basis to offices away from Headquarters.

46. The IMIS Help Desk in the Office of Human Resources Management maintains the human resources desk procedures and is available for clarifying human resources substantive and desk procedure questions. The Finance and Support Services (Travel and Procurement) IMIS Help Desk maintains the relating services desk procedures and are available for clarifying substantive and desk procedure questions. The Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts is in the process of completing an update of the finance desk procedures.

III. Implementation of the Integrated Management Information System in tribunals and peacekeeping operations

47. It may be recalled that the Secretary-General was requested to submit a detailed plan for the implementation of IMIS at tribunals and peacekeeping missions.

48. In the case of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, all international staff are already being administered through IMIS at Headquarters. The implementation of payroll in Headquarters will be extended also to that staff. If it were decided to implement IMIS at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, the system would most likely have to be implemented locally although the results of the tests for remote accessibility could potentially make it possible to access the United Nations Office at Nairobi IMIS from the headquarters of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and use it remotely for that Tribunal's purposes. In the case of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, some contacts have recently taken place to present possible alternatives to its administration, but these contacts still remain at a very high level. The implementation of the system for the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia could be either local or through remote access to the United Nations Office at Geneva.

49. The situation concerning the peacekeeping missions is more complex. Currently, 2,800 international staff are already administered through IMIS at Headquarters. The records of another 1,000 staff are also kept in IMIS for administrative and reporting reasons. Given the local conditions, however, IMIS cannot be implemented in most of the peacekeeping missions. Owing to the different size and nature of such missions, the local conditions and the needs for immediate deployment of systems at very short notice, there may be multiple different solutions, as follows: (a) a "lighter" IMIS could be rapidly deployed and activated at most of the missions, and in that case, would not require local specialized expertise; (b) remote accessibility of IMIS already installed at Headquarters, or at other duty stations with respect to some other peacekeeping missions could be provided; and (c) IMIS "as is" could be deployed at the established missions. In addition, a more specific data consolidation mechanism for consolidated reporting would be required.

50. It had been agreed between the Department of Management and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations that the analysis of this issue would be conducted at four levels: the IMIS database itself, the front end, the specific functionalities that are required by the peacekeeping missions but are not currently available and the technical platform, including remote accessibility and portability. An analysis of the benefits and functionalities existing in IMIS which are not yet available at the peacekeeping missions is also needed.

51. Owing to the current limited resources available to both the Department of Management and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the first phase of the project will focus on remote accessibility. While there does not seem to be difficulties concerning the structure and design of the database, it is clear that the front end would have to be re-engineered better to meet the specific requirements of the peacekeeping missions. The upgrade of the system and the porting to the Web could facilitate this task. In the case of functionality not currently available in IMIS, while some are required to be developed within the system, such as the local staff-relating functionalities, others which already exist would require interfaces. This is not much different from the present situation, where several separate systems are used for human resources, payroll, accounting and logistics.

52. Once this analysis is completed, a cost-benefit analysis will have to be conducted, namely, an analysis of the current operational costs of the various systems in place, the expected life span of such systems and projected replacement costs, versus the costs required for making IMIS suitable for deployment at peacekeeping missions and its operations costs. At this stage, it is not possible to give an answer — either positive or negative — with regard to the mode and time-frame for implementation of IMIS at peacekeeping missions. The level of resources required for conducting such analysis will be jointly determined by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Management and may be requested in the context of the proposed budget for peacekeeping missions for future financial periods. Progress made on this issue will also be reflected in the thirteenth progress report on IMIS.

IV. The Integrated Management Information System as a common service

53. An agreement in principle on the establishment of an IMIS common service has been reached with UNDP, UNFPA, the United Nations Office for Project Services and UNICEF, to provide maintenance services and development in the common interest of the partners and to provide technical help-desk and consulting services on a full cost-recovery basis. Substantive interest groups, including representatives of the United Nations funds and programmes, have been established in the four substantive areas of finance, human resources management, support services and technical infrastructure, and have been in operation since June 2000.

54. As regards the mode of financing the IMIS common service, based on the amount of changes made to the United Nations version of IMIS and on the parts of the system being used or expected to be used by each organization, it was agreed that the United Nations maintenance team would need to be strengthened in the long term. Such additional and relating operating costs would also be shared among the beneficiaries.

V. Future developments

55. Following the successful implementation of all main functionalities of the system, the IMIS maintenance team will concentrate on: (a) continuous assistance to offices away from Headquarters in implementation of the system locally and relating issues of training and technical support; (b) issues identified during testings and those arising in the course of normal operation of the system; and (c) major enhancements to the system in response to legislative or managerial decisions.

56. The major system enhancements, which have already been mentioned in various parts of the report, can be summarized as follows:

(a) Further consolidation of data, with a view to facilitating global reporting and preparation of the financial statements. Work on this (long-term) project has already begun;

(b) Archiving of IMIS data that is no longer required. Work has already begun and is projected for completion in early 2002;

(c) Upgrading of the technical platform to enable moving the entire application to the Web. The work on this project has already begun and is expected to be completed by the third quarter of 2001;

(d) Analysis of the requirements for the system implementation in the tribunals and peacekeeping missions. The work on this project would commence in 2001;

(e) Implementation of electronic forms, with a view to updating the system (pilot project to be completed by the end of 2001);

(f) Implementation of "personal accounts" to make the IMIS personal data (fact sheets, personnel actions, claims, payroll statements) available to staff on-line (pilot project to be completed by the end of 2001);

(g) Re-engineering of the users' interface, with a view to making the system more user-friendly (the project will be initiated in 2001);

(h) Research of the new reporting tool, with a view to replacing the one currently used (future project).

57. The main objectives of these projects are to capitalize on the achievements attained thus far with the development and implementation of the system in order to contribute to the creation of an electronic United Nations by further streamlining workflow processes, simplifying and accelerating the processing of personnel and financial transactions and increasing usage of the system as a management tool. It is intended that these major improvements be completed from within the existing resources made available for the IMIS operations.

VI. Budgetary matters

58. By its resolution 53/219 of 7 April 1999 the General Assembly, after reviewing the tenth progress report, the report of the independent experts and the report of the Board of Auditors, approved overall budget estimates of $77.6 million for completion of the development of IMIS. As reflected in table 1 below, the projected overall level of expenditures is currently expected to remain within the approved amount of $77.6 million. As was to be expected, some adjustments had to be made in the distribution of projected expenditures based on the actual expenditures during the period from November 1998 to date.

59. The staff cost projections, based on actual expenditures to date, show a projected lower expenditure of $975,900, primarily owing to differences between actual and budgeted standard staff costs and higher than expected rotation of the IMIS staff. The projected expenditures until the end of the project relate to the salaries of the local coordinators at offices away from Headquarters, the salaries of project staff required for the implementation of Releases 3 and 4 worldwide, including the parallel running of payroll, and resources for offices away from Headquarters to assist during the implementation phases of Releases 3 and 4.

60. The projected travel costs, related exclusively for implementation activities at offices away from Headquarters, show an increase of $395,600, owing to the higher number of staff assigned to pre-implementation and implementation activities at those offices.

Table 1
Revised estimates for the development and implementation budget of the Integrated Management Information System
(Thousands of United States dollars)

	Overall budget estimates approved by the General Assembly	*Expenditures as at 31 October 2000*	*Projected expenditures for the period from November 2000 to project end*	*Revised total cost of the project*	*Estimated surplus (deficit)*
General temporary assistance	20 521.4	18 368.0	1 177.5	19 545.5	975.9
Travel	1 149.9	1 017.9	527.6	1 545.5	(395.6)
Training	4 681.3	3 937.4	740.6	4 678.0	3.3
Contractual services	45 759.1	43 423.1	146.4	46 596.2	(837.0)
Communications	301.8	283.9	-	283.9	17.9
Supplies/miscellaneous expenses	235.7	303.0	5.4	308.5	(72.7)
Hardware	3 105.3	2 815.3	9.2	2 824.8	280.5
Software	1 824.5	1 724.5	72.2	1 796.7	27.8
Total	**77 578.9**	**74 873.0**	**2 705.9**	**77 578.9**	**-**

61. The projected expenditures for contractual services show an increase of $837,000, due to a need for extended support services by the main contractor in relation to the testing of payroll and from other contractors working on the reports development. The quality of the implementation of payroll and the increased usage of reports confirm the correctness of the approach taken. It should be noted that, by the end of October 2000, the contract with the main contractor had been completed.

62. Projected expenditures for training, hardware, software, communications and supplies show minor variations due to actual requirements.

VII. Conclusions and recommendations

63. **In summary:**

(a) The development phase of the system has been completed with the successful implementation of the payroll application;

(b) The implementation of the finance applications at offices away from Headquarters is progressing successfully;

(c) Some delays have been encountered in the implementation of payroll at Headquarters and for the finance and payroll applications at offices away from Headquarters. In those cases, priority has been given to the quality of the implementation, rather than to adherence to scheduled dates. The successful implementation of the system has confirmed the correctness of this strategy. The finance applications will be completely implemented at offices away from Headquarters by mid-2001. The implementation of payroll at offices away from Headquarters will be determined locally, in consultation with Headquarters and taking into account local conditions and constraints;

(d) The main contractor services, minimal since June 2000, were discontinued at the end of October 2000;

(e) The issues related to the possible implementation of the system in tribunals and peacekeeping missions will be reviewed during 2001, in consultation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the local administrations concerned, and reported on to the General Assembly, as appropriate;

(f) The IMIS team has undertaken a number of improvements to the system. It plans further major improvements which will ensure better functioning of the system, fuller response to the users' needs and will contribute to the creation of the electronic United Nations;

(g) The overall level of expenditure for implementation of the system is projected to remain within the budget of the project approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 52/219.

64. **The General Assembly may wish to take note of the present report.**

Annex I

Table 1
Standard reports in production and under development as at September 2000 and Integrated Management Information System Reporting Facility report statistics

	Integrated Management Information System Reporting Facility report statistics as at 31 August 2000. Sorted by subject area name within category						
	In production		*In progress*		*Total*		*Modified reports over last 12 months*
Subject area	*31 August 1999*	*31 August 2000*	*31 August 1999*	*31 August 2000*	*31 August 1999*	*31 August 2000*	
Reference							
Accounting reference	79	77	1	-	80	77	5
Entitlement reference	25	25	3	-	28	25	8
Geographic reference	34	34	-	-	34	34	-
Personnel reference	23	23	-	-	23	23	-
Payroll reference	-	-	1	-	1	-	-
Travel reference	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reference total	**161**	**159**	**5**	**-**	**166**	**159**	**13**
Business areas							
Budget	3	3	3	-	6	3	-
Insurance	-	10	12	1	12	11	-
Payroll	2	6	21	12	23	18	-
Personnel administration	41	43	1	2	42	45	6
Post management	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Procurement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Standard financial	78	85	3	5	81	90	13
Standard financial technical cooperation	6	6	19	16	25	22	6
Time and attendance	6	6	-	-	6	6	6
Travel and transportation	5	5	-	-	5	5	-
Treasury	2	3	-	-	2	3	-
User security	31	31	-	-	31	31	3
Business areas total	**174**	**198**	**59**	**36**	**233**	**234**	**34**
Grand total	**335**	**357**	**64**	**36**	**399**	**393**	**47**
Executive office							
Standard financial	25	32	-	-	25	32	-
Personnel administration	32	39	-	-	32	39	-
Executive office total	**57**	**71**	**-**	**-**	**57**	**71**	**-**
Grand total	**392**	**428**	**64**	**36**	**456**	**464**	**47**

Annex II

Integrated Management Information System implementation dates and usage and reporting statistics as at August 2000

A. Implementation dates

	UNHQ	*UNOV*	*ESCAP*	*UNOG*	*ECLAC*	*UNON*	*ECA*	*ESCWA*
Live date								
Release 1 (HR)	9/93	6/96	8/96	3/97	4/97	6/97	10/97	2/98
Release 2 (Ent)	4/98	8/98	8/98	8/98	9/98	1/99	8/98	7/98
Release 3 (Fin)	4/96	5/99	3/01	4/00	7/00	7/01	10/00	10/99
Release 4 (Payroll)	9/00							

B. Usage statistics as at August 2000

	UNHQ	*UNOV*	*ESCAP*	*UNOG*	*ECLAC*	*UNON*	*ECA*	*ESCWA*
Number of users								
Registered users	1 366[a]	321	90	592	208	45	138	192
Transactions								
Approved PAs	214 831	15 886	6 646	49 378	7 357	14 896	8 245	3 485
Recruitment requests	1 000	68	10	411	0	0	15	0
Travel requests	34 554	2 756		3 961	93			786
Pre-encumbrances created	61 900	1 354		4 188	1 940			733
Obligations created	77 406	1 384		3 477	1 948			719
Database size								
Staff members	10 028[b]	1 014	636	3 790	615	1 311	719	323
Household members	14 255	1 515	1 332	6 066	1 349	3 291	2 200	688

C. Reporting statistics from 14 to 29 August 2000

	*UNHQ**	*ECA*	*ESCAP*	*ESCWA*	*UNOG*	*UNON*	*ECLAC*	*UNOV*
Number of transactions	23 588	50	28	491	1 297	105	320	500
Number of download(s)	4 090	1	0	26	267	17	28	9
Number of run report(s)	19 194	49	28	465	1 012	88	272	490
Number of unique users	334	1	3	18	60	4	9	31

* 9 May-31 August.

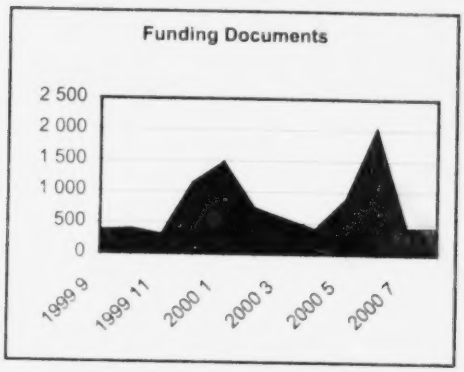
[a] Per a recommendation of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, expired user identifications have been removed. As a result there are fewer registered users as compared to 1999.

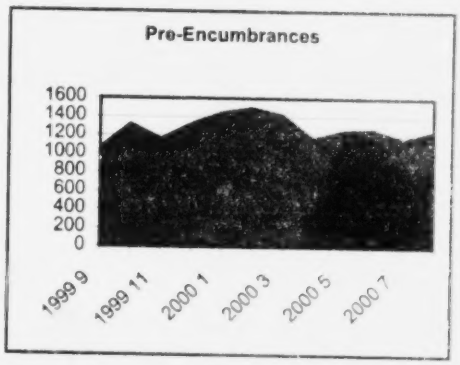
[b] Approximately 8,500 staff are payrolled by United Nations Headquarters and over 1,500 are administered by United Nations Headquarters but payrolled by another location. Of the 1,500, 1,000 are staff of the Field Administration and Logistics Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

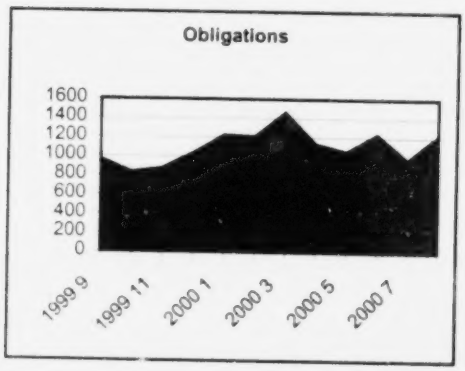
Annex III

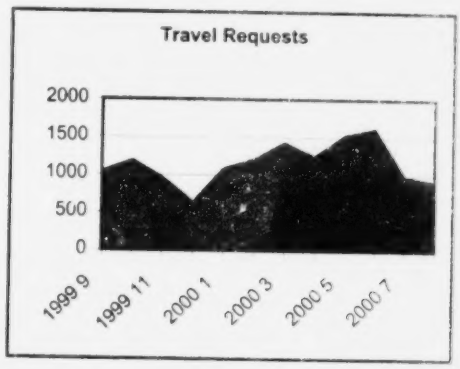
Integrated Management Information System monthly usage statistics

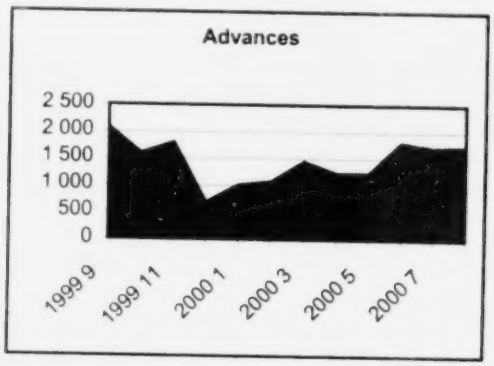
(September 1999-August 2000)

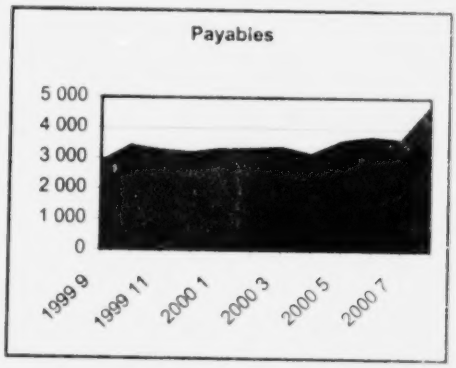


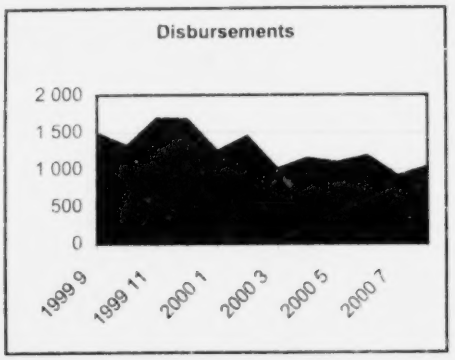








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1 000
500
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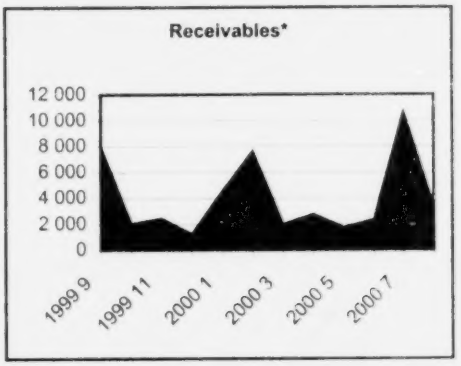
1999 11
2000 1
2000 3
2000 5
2000 7


Receivables*
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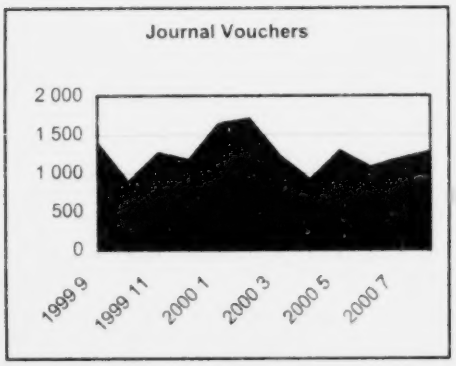
10 000
8 000
6 000
4 000
2 000
0
1999 9
1999 11
2000 1
2000 3
2000 5
2000 7


Journal Vouchers
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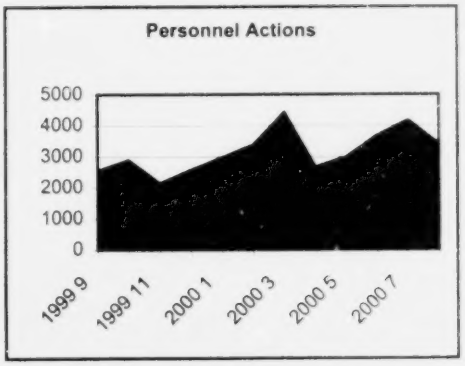
1 500
1 000
500
0
1999 9
1999 11
2000 1
2000 3
2000 5
2000 7


Personnel Actions
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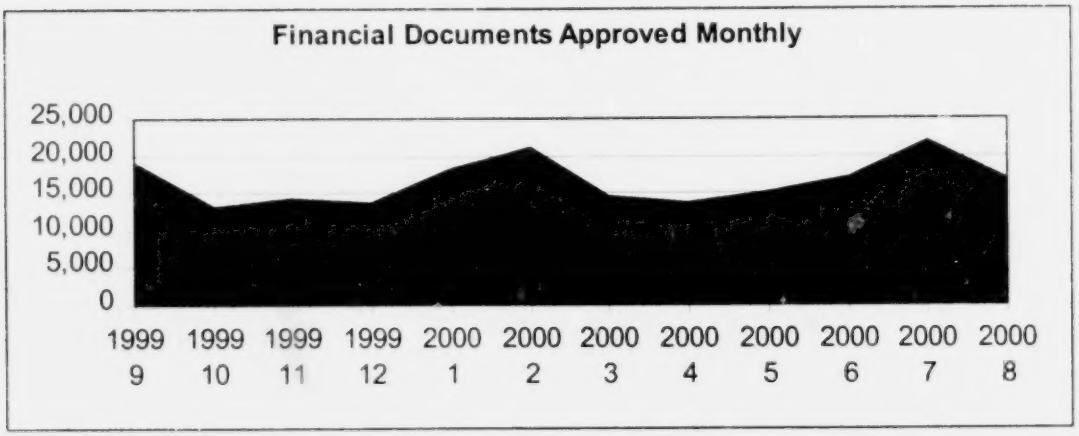
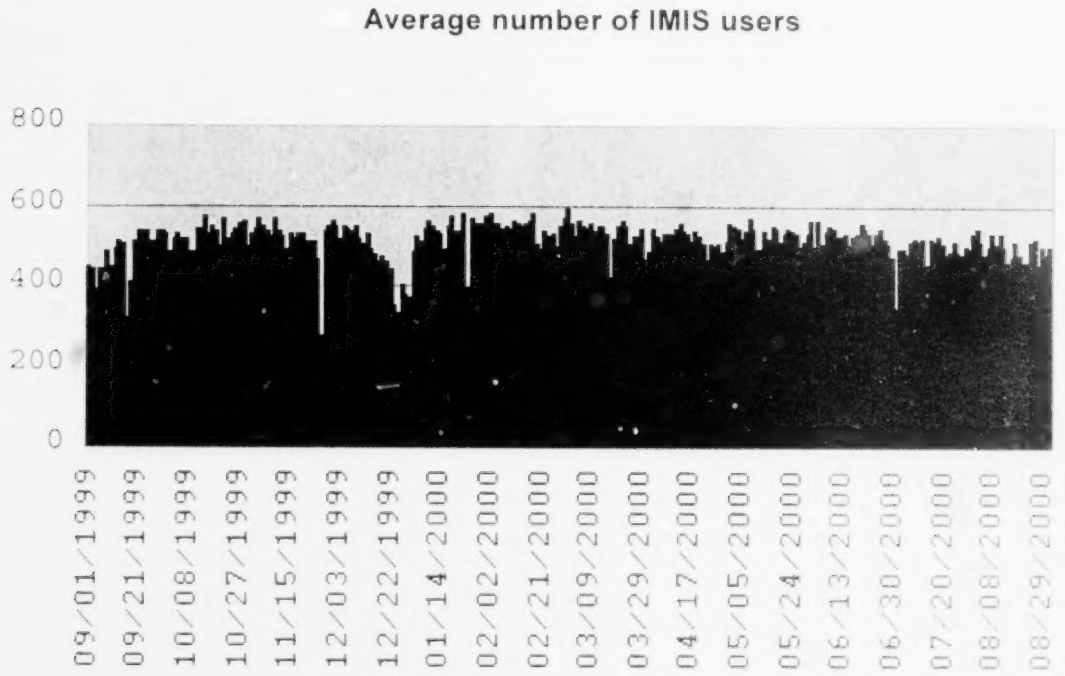
3000
2000
1000
0
1999 9
1999 11
2000 1
2000 3
2000 5
2000 7


Financial Documents Approved Monthly
25,000
20,000
15,000
10,000
5,000
0
1999 9
1999 10
1999 11
1999 12
2000 1
2000 2
2000 3
2000 4
2000 5
2000 6
2000 7
2000 8

Monthly average of distinct users

For the reporting period (01 Sep 1999 - 31 Aug 2000), the average of distinct users accessing IMIS on a normal workday is 511.

September 1999 – August 2000



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General Assembly
Fifty-fifth session
Agenda item 46
The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security

Security Council
Fifty-fifth year

The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General*

I. Introduction

1. This report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 54/189 A of 17 December 1999, in which the Assembly requested me to report to it at its fifty-fifth session on the progress made in the implementation of that resolution. In the same resolution, the Assembly also requested me to report every three months during its fifty-fourth session on the progress of the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan (UNSMA). Three progress reports have been submitted: the first on 10 March 2000 (A/54/791-S/2000/205), the second on 16 June 2000 (A/54/918-S/2000/581) and the third on 18 September 2000 (A/55/393-S/2000/875).

2. The present report, which covers developments since the issuance of the last annual report on 16 November 1999 (A/54/536-S/1999/1145), is also submitted in response to requests by the Security Council for regular information on the main developments in Afghanistan. The report describes the principal events that have taken place in Afghanistan, including the major military and political developments, as well as the activities of my Personal Representative, Francesc Vendrell, who is also Head of UNSMA.

II. Peacemaking efforts and activities of the special mission

A. Peacemaking efforts

3. During my visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran in mid-June 2000, in connection with Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon, the Iranian leadership noted with appreciation the opening in Tehran of an UNSMA liaison office as well as the participation of my Personal Representative in the talks with the warring factions sponsored by the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), which were held at Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, in March and May 2000.

4. At the Millennium Summit at the beginning of September, I discussed the situation in Afghanistan and the ongoing peacemaking efforts by UNSMA with a large number of Heads of State and Foreign Ministers, including the Presidents of Kazakhstan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Russian Federation, as well as

* In accordance with General Assembly resolution 54/248, sect. C, para. 1, the present report is being submitted on 20 November so as to take into account the most recent developments concerning Afghanistan.

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the Chief Executive of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

5. During the Ninth Summit of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, which took place in Doha, Qatar, on 12 and 13 November 2000, I participated in several discussions on the issue of Afghanistan, in particular with the Heads of State of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan. My Personal Representative also attended the Ninth Summit and took part in several of my meetings in Doha.

6. Immediately following his appointment on 1 February 2000, my Personal Representative embarked on his first visit to Afghanistan, as well as to the countries which are members of the "six plus two" group on Afghanistan. In the initial stage, Mr. Vendrell focused on familiarizing himself with the situation in and around Afghanistan and on listening to the views of the Afghan parties as well as of the Governments of the "six plus two" group and other concerned and interested Governments. At a subsequent stage, while developing and strengthening his contacts, he began to evolve, in coordination with his interlocutors, some idea as to how a peace process, under the auspices of the United Nations, might be structured.

7. In Kabul and Kandahar, which my Personal Representative has visited on several occasions, his main interlocutor has been the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Taliban, Wakil Ahmad Mutawakkil. In addition, on 5 September, Mr. Vendrell met with the Taliban supreme leader, Mullah Mohammad Omar, and on other occasions with the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Mullah Mohammad Rabbani, the Governor of Kandahar Province, Mullah Hassan Rahmani, the Taliban Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mullah Abdul Jalil, and, more recently, with the Minister of Education, Amir Khan Muttaqi, who has been appointed the Taliban's chief negotiator. In Faizabad, Dushanbe, Tashkent and New York, Mr. Vendrell has had frequent meetings with leaders of the United Front, including the President of the Islamic State, Professor Burhanuddin Rabbani, the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. A. Abdullah, and Commander Ahmad Shah Massoud. My Personal Representative and his staff have also maintained regular contacts with other anti-Taliban commanders, including General Abdul Rashid Dostum, leader of the Jumbesh-e Melli-ye Islami-ye Afghanistan, Mohammad Ismail Khan, the former Governor of Herat who escaped from a Kandahar prison in late March, and Professor Karim Khalili, leader of the Shiite Hazara faction Hezb-e Wahdat.

8. Topics covered in my Personal Representative's talks have included the repeated demands by the Security Council in its various resolutions and statements for an immediate ceasefire; the non-targeting of the civilian population in the course of the fighting; other humanitarian and human rights matters; issues of terrorism and poppy cultivation; and the views of his interlocutors on the establishment of a broadly based, multi-ethnic and representative government. The discussions have also touched on relations with third countries. In this connection, each side has vehemently complained about persistent outside interference in support of the other side.

9. In discussing these issues, both sides have expressed their willingness to consider a negotiated solution to the conflict, although, as an alternative, the Taliban authorities have also cited the political surrender of or a military victory over their opponents. Both sides have expressed their opposition to terrorism, with the Taliban frequently stressing that the territory of Afghanistan would not be used to carry out attacks against other nations.

10. Regarding the demand of the Security Council, contained in resolution 1267 (1999) of 15 October 1999, that the Taliban turn over Osama bin Laden without delay, the Taliban reiterated its position that Mr. bin Laden took up residence when Afghanistan was under the control of the previous regime and that there was not sufficient evidence linking him to specific terrorist acts. The Taliban authorities have made it clear that they consider Mr. bin Laden as their guest and that the customs of Pashtoon hospitality do not allow for his expulsion from the country. The Taliban claim that Mr. bin Laden has no means to carry out such activities outside Afghan territory. As an alternative to his voluntary departure, an option which the Taliban authorities have at times said they would foster, the Taliban again proposed that he be tried in Afghanistan by a court composed of ulemas drawn from Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia and a third Islamic country.

11. On the issue of a ceasefire, my Personal Representative has formed the impression that, despite their stated willingness to consider such a move, neither side has in reality ruled out future military activities; that any ceasefire arrived at would risk being

short-lived, particularly in the absence of verification; and that it could easily degenerate into a trade of accusations about violations to the detriment of mutual confidence and serious negotiations.

12. Most recently, my Personal Representative has concentrated his efforts on securing an agreement by the two warring parties to initiate a process of dialogue. On 30 October 2000, in separate letters addressed to my Personal Representative, both the Taliban and the United Front agreed to enter into a process of dialogue under my good offices aimed at bringing about, in the shortest possible time, an end to the armed conflict in Afghanistan through political means (see A/55/548-S/2000/1077, annexes I and II). They have also agreed that this process should be conducted either through direct meetings between the two sides, either with my active participation or that of my Personal Representative, or indirectly through my intermediation or that of my Personal Representative. Notable in the agreement is the commitment of the two sides to participate in the dialogue with serious intent and in good faith; and not to abandon the process unilaterally, but rather to pursue it without interruption until the negotiating agenda, to be agreed by the two sides, is exhausted.

13. Following this agreement, my Personal Representative has begun to shuttle between the two sides to discuss elements for the negotiating agenda. In the event that he considers that there is sufficient basis for an eventual agreement, he would schedule a meeting of the two sides, possibly before the end of 2000. In the meantime, the Taliban authorities have appointed the Minister of Education, Amir Khan Muttaqi, as head of their negotiating team, while the United Front has indicated that Acting Foreign Minister Abdullah will conduct the negotiations on their side.

14. My Personal Representative has met on two separate occasions this year, in June and October, with the former King of Afghanistan, Zahir Shah, and members of his entourage to exchange views on the situation in Afghanistan and to discuss the former King's ideas on how a *loya jirga*, a traditional grand assembly, could be convened inside Afghanistan. He has also held a series of meetings in Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Germany with independent Afghan personalities, including many who support the ex-King's proposal for the convening of an emergency *loya jirga*. I wish to take this opportunity to stress that clearly the criterion for participation in the shaping of Afghanistan's future cannot be the holding of weapons, but that non-fighting Afghans, both inside and outside the country, have much to contribute and need to be involved in deciding the ultimate destiny of their country.

15. In the contacts that my Personal Representative has had with members of the "six plus two" group and other concerned Governments, they have expressed their frustration with the continued war in Afghanistan and the absence of a political settlement. They view international terrorism, illicit drug production/trafficking and extremism emanating from Afghanistan as a serious threat to regional stability. Many have strongly criticized the Taliban for its apparent determination to press a military solution, which, those Governments asserted, was an unachievable and unacceptable option. Others consider a Taliban victory inevitable and are consequently of the opinion that the international community should start engaging the Taliban in the expectation that this might lead to changes in the Taliban's policies and behaviour. All have nonetheless acknowledged the central role of the United Nations in the resolution of the Afghan issue and have reiterated their full support both for my efforts and for those of my Personal Representative.

16. Mr. Vendrell has maintained close contact with the Governments of Afghanistan's neighbours, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, and has held several meetings, on which I have already reported, with their leaders. Most recently, Mr. Vendrell met with the Foreign Ministers of Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, as well as with the Special Presidential Envoy of Turkmenistan on Afghanistan and with senior officials from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan, including the Deputy Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Foreign Secretary of Pakistan. During his latest visit to Tehran on 8 and 9 October, Mr. Vendrell discussed the issue of Afghanistan at length with the Chief of the Afghan Headquarters, Ibrahim Taherian, as well as with the Deputy Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Mohsen Aminzadeh and Javad Zarif.

17. The focus of my Personal Representative's discussions has been the implications for regional and international security of the situation in Afghanistan, the prospects for peace, the means of achieving a lasting settlement, the question of human rights,

terrorism and drug production/trafficking. All his interlocutors pledged their cooperation in assisting the United Nations to establish a peace process between the Afghan parties. On 3 November, my Personal Representative and the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator for Afghanistan briefed the Security Council on their activities.

B. Activities of the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan, including the Civil Affairs Unit

18. During the reporting period, UNSMA strengthened its political presence in the region with the opening of a liaison office in Tehran and the reopening of a political office in Kabul. The Civil Affairs Unit has become operational, with offices in six locations in Afghanistan. UNSMA's military component has been reinvigorated and it is my intention to restore it to its previous strength of four, with the Senior Military Adviser stationed in Islamabad, one adviser based in Afghanistan, one in Tajikistan, covering the north of Afghanistan, and the fourth rotating as required.

Civil Affairs Unit

19. The primary objective of the Civil Affairs Unit of UNSMA, as defined in Security Council resolution 1214 (1998), is to monitor the situation, promote and support respect for minimum humanitarian standards and deter massive and systematic violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. In order to achieve this objective, the Unit, which functions like civil affairs components of other United Nations operations, combines elements of information-gathering with human rights observation through its presence inside Afghanistan. In doing so, the Unit also assists the Personal Representative in carrying out the good offices of the Secretary-General by promoting a better understanding and knowledge of the needs and demands of the Afghan people and providing vital information that will help him develop an agenda more responsive to those needs and demands. It is only through the building of contacts and greater familiarity with the needs of the people that the United Nations can become more effective in pursuing its peacemaking activities. This year, the first full year of the Unit's existence, has clearly been one of an exploratory nature, laying the foundations for deeper involvement with the Afghan people.

20. With the recent opening of an office in Mazar-e-Sharif, the Unit's nationwide deployment is complete in the six major urban centres, Faizabad, Herat, Jalalabad, Kabul and Kandahar. The Unit would also like to open an office in Bamyan in order to observe the situation on the ground in the central highlands more closely. Missions have meanwhile been deployed to the Hazarajat and Ghor regions in the central highlands. The Unit is currently composed of a Coordinator and seven Civil Affairs Officers; the recruitment of four more officers is expected to be completed by the end of 2000. By early 2001, UNSMA should achieve its aim of stationing two Civil Affairs Officers in each of its main duty stations in Afghanistan.

21. Working inside the country, the Civil Affairs Officers are attempting to build up and strengthen an ongoing persuasive dialogue with Afghan authorities at both the regional and local levels in areas such as administration, the law enforcement agencies, the judiciary and the media, with a view to fostering human rights awareness among these key groups.

22. In engaging Afghan civil society, Civil Affairs Officers have pursued contacts with women's groups, youth organizations, private and non-governmental organization (NGO)-run media, religious leaders, intellectuals and *shuras* (traditional assemblies of local notables). They have monitored and reported on political, social, economic and cultural trends, including highlights on the human rights situation in Afghanistan, and are also studying areas such as administration, judiciary, legislature, constitution, media and economic activities in order to better map the current and future situation of Afghanistan and to respond to the needs of Afghans. A significant decline in the already largely insufficient financial and human resources allocated to the civil sector has been recorded nationwide.

III. Recent developments in Afghanistan

A. Military situation

23. This year the fighting season started earlier than usual. The Taliban, with their superiority in number

and logistics, took the initiative from the outset. The intensity of this year's fighting indicates that the flow of arms and other war-making materiel into Afghanistan continued unabated and, during the last few months, even rose to new levels. Reports suggest that the presence of non-Afghan fighters, mainly from Pakistan, is significant. The season's full-scale fighting started in the north of Kabul with two vigorous offensives by the Taliban forces on 1 and 9 July. Detailed descriptions of the fighting during the spring and summer periods were given in my previous reports to the General Assembly and the Security Council.

24. In September and early October the victorious Taliban forces secured wider areas around Taloqan and embarked upon a series of attacks to the north, capturing the districts of Khwajaghar, Dashti Archi and Emam Saheb in Takhar Province. At this point, Badakhshan Province was the sole province left entirely under control of the United Front.

25. On 14 October, the United Front launched a successful counterattack at a moment when the Taliban forces were rotating units and releasing the veterans from seven weeks of sustained fighting, replacing them with fresh units. The districts of Emam Saheb, Dashti Archi and Emam Saheb were rapidly recaptured and the United Front forces advanced towards Taloqan from the east and north. After 10 days of progress, the United Front counter-offensive ebbed and the Taliban was able to push the attacking forces back. As of 5 November, the confrontation lines were more or less the same as at 13 October, and the situation appeared to have developed into a stalemate.

26. The Taliban campaign in Baghlan/Takhar engaged around 13,000 to 15,000 Taliban fighters after reinforcement, while less than half that figure fought on the side of the United Front. The fight for Taloqan in particular was tense. Both sides sustained heavy losses in terms of people killed, wounded or captured, estimated in total at 6,000 to 9,000; 65 per cent of those casualties can be attributed to the Taliban forces.

27. This year's military setback put the United Front under intense pressure. A series of meetings were hurriedly convened with the evident purpose of saving the alliance from disintegrating and inviting non-United Front commanders to join the fight against the Taliban. Apart from a reported meeting between the two Uzbek commanders, Generals Dostum and Abdul Malik, in the eastern Iranian city of Masshad earlier in the year, two potentially significant encounters among key anti-Taliban commanders Massoud, Dostum and Ismail Khan took place in the Islamic Republic of Iran, in October and November, as a response to the perception of increased foreign support to the Taliban. It was agreed at their first meeting that the United Front would establish a new military council, to include themselves and other key commanders.

28. Winning over the loyalty of opponents and switching sides has been part of the civil war in Afghanistan. On 25 July, the Taliban arrested Mohammad Bashir Baghlani, the Governor of Baghlan Province and one of the Taliban's key allies in northern Afghanistan, on charges that he had established secret contacts with the opposition. The arrest triggered clashes between the Taliban and the United Front. Shortly afterwards, Abdullah Jan Wahidi, the former Governor of Laghman Province, who had announced his alliance with the Taliban in a publicized ceremony in late April, defected back to the United Front. In late August, it was reported that differences had developed between the Governor of the central province of Bamyan, Maulawi Islam, and the Taliban. There have been reports since mid-July of infighting among the United Front leadership in areas adjacent to Faizabad, the provincial capital of Badakhshan.

B. Political situation

Regional issues

29. The conflict in Afghanistan is having an increasing impact on the situation in Central and South Asia. Afghanistan's neighbours and countries farther afield are worried about spill-over effects from the ongoing fighting between the Taliban and the United Front.

30. The President of the United States of America, Bill Clinton, visited India and Pakistan in March. During his visit to Islamabad, Mr. Clinton discussed the question of terrorism and the continued presence in Afghanistan of Osama bin Laden with Pakistan's Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf. These issues as well as those related to peace and human rights in Afghanistan have been the object of further discussions between Pakistan and the United States, including those held during the visit to Islamabad, in late May, of Thomas Pickering, Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs, and the visits by Karl Inderfurth, Assistant

Secretary of State, and Michael Sheehan, Head of the Office of Counter-Terrorism of the State Department, on several occasions in 2000.

31. In September, the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, dispatched a Special Envoy, Sergei Yastrebzhemsky, to Islamabad for discussions on Afghanistan with senior Pakistani officials, including Chief Executive Musharraf and General Mahmud Ahmad, Director-General of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). During his visit to India in October, President Putin agreed with Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee to coordinate efforts to counter terrorism in the region, in particular that emanating from Afghanistan. An Indian and Russian working group has already been formed in this regard.

32. The United States and the Russian Federation held two rounds of high-level talks, in Washington, D.C., in August and in Moscow in October, to exchange views on the situation in Afghanistan. It has been reported that after the second round in Moscow, the two countries agreed to put international pressure on the Taliban. The Taliban authorities rejected the claim that they posed a threat to stability in the Central Asian region.

33. The Central Asian States remain on high alert with regard to the situation in Afghanistan. In mid-April, the Presidents of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan met at Tashkent and signed an agreement on joint action to fight terrorism as well as political, religious and other kinds of extremism and international organized crime, of which Afghanistan was perceived to be the source. The Russian Federation expressed its increasing concern about the Taliban's alleged support for the Chechen rebels inside and outside Afghanistan. All these concerns have been strongly rejected by the Taliban.

34. In October 2000, a summit meeting was held in Bishkek by States (with the exception of Uzbekistan) parties to accords signed on 24 May 2000 in Minsk, reinvigorating the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) collective security treaty to counter terrorism and extremism. The purpose of the summit meeting, in which the Presidents of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation and Tajikistan participated, was to discuss a long-term mutual security plan. In a statement issued on 11 October, the group urged the Security Council to convene a special session to deal with the civil war in Afghanistan. The Presidents also called for an Islamic conference to be convened jointly by the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to coordinate efforts to end the Afghan conflict.

35. The "Shanghai five" group (now the "Shanghai forum" group), comprising China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation and Tajikistan, at its summit meeting in Dushanbe on 5 July, called for an end to the Afghan conflict, expressed concern over tensions in Afghanistan and discussed means of countering terrorism originating from that country. The Presidents of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan convened an emergency summit meeting in Bishkek on 20 August to address security issues in the aftermath of an infiltration earlier in the month by armed Uzbek groups into Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, which they believed had originated in Afghanistan.

36. In mid-May, Taliban Interior Minister Mullah Abdur Razzaq paid an official visit to Islamabad to hold discussions with Pakistani authorities on the extradition of criminals, terrorism, drug trafficking and the Afghanistan Transit Trade Agreement. At that time Pakistan handed over a list of 18 camps inside Afghanistan where Pakistani militants allegedly receive military training and demanded the closure of those camps and the extradition of those suspected of terrorist activities in Pakistan. Taliban authorities have reportedly sought over 100 million dollars worth of assistance from Pakistan for rehabilitation projects.

37. In a development that added another source of regional concern related to Afghanistan, it was reported that in early May Jumaboi Namangani, an Uzbek dissident, had crossed with his armed followers from Tajikistan into Taliban-held territory in northern Afghanistan. An official Taliban radio broadcast called the allegation baseless since such an act would contravene their foreign policy principles. There have also been persistent reports of the involvement of a substantial number of Arabs, Chechens, Pakistanis, Uighurs and other outsiders fighting alongside the Taliban in Afghanistan. The Taliban have similarly denied these allegations.

38. To my grave concern, this year has seen the continued targeting and killing of Afghan leaders for political reasons. The Taliban-appointed Governor of Kunduz Province, Aref Khan, as well as other Afghans were slain in the Pakistani city of Peshawar. In none of

these cases has a suspect been identified or apprehended by Pakistani law enforcement forces.

Contacts between individual States and Afghan parties

39. Since the beginning of 2000, numerous Iranian technical delegations have visited Taliban-controlled areas of Afghanistan with the stated purpose of inspecting and assessing the damage suffered by their diplomatic facilities in the cities of Herat and Kabul. Although the Islamic Republic of Iran has yet to receive what it considers a satisfactory reply from the Taliban to its demand for the apprehension and extradition or punishment of those responsible for the killing of Iranian diplomats and a journalist in Mazar-e-Sharif in August 1998, the border post between Islam Qaleh and Do Ghalun, reopened in the autumn of 1999, has remained open for trade throughout 2000 and the Iranian Consulate in Herat has reopened.

40. The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Italy, Ugo Intini, visited the two warring sides in late September in an attempt to create a "humanitarian corridor" between the war-divided territories of Afghanistan. Mr. Intini had discussed the initiative with Taliban Foreign Minister Mutawakkil and United Front Commander Massoud, in Kabul and Dushanbe, respectively.

41. Recent weeks have seen the initiation of contacts between Uzbekistan and the Taliban through their ambassadors in Islamabad. At their second meeting, on 15 October, a letter was delivered from Mullah Mohammad Rabbani, Chairman of the Council of Ministers, addressed to President Karimov, assuring non-interference in the internal affairs of Uzbekistan. A third meeting took place on 18 October, at which agreement was reportedly reached on stepping up the level of diplomatic contact to that of deputy foreign minister. Following a meeting on 7 November between the Chief Executive of Pakistan, Pervez Musharraf, and the Prime Minister of Kazakhstan, Kasymzhomart Tokayev, the latter stated that in the future the Taliban would most likely have a dominating role in a coalition government in Afghanistan.

42. On 9 October, a private airline company, Flying Dolphin, based in the United Arab Emirates, inaugurated a weekly flight between the cities Sharjah and Kandahar. This is the first commercial airline to operate in and out of Afghanistan since the sanctions provisioned in resolution 1267 (1999) went into effect on 14 November 1999.

C. Initiatives taken by Afghans and Member States

Rome process

43. As decided at a meeting in Rome in November 1999, supporters of the *loya jirga* initiative, led by former King Zahir Shah, the so-called "Rome process", dispatched delegations to United Nations Headquarters, Washington, D.C., Paris, Berlin, London, Islamabad and Kandahar to explain their activities and to seek support. My Personal Representative met in Islamabad with two separate delegations visiting Pakistan and the Taliban in the context of the proposal to convene an emergency *loya jirga*. The former King also intends to dispatch delegations to the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Central Asian republics, the Russian Federation and Saudi Arabia, as well as to the United Front.

Other processes and efforts

44. A representative of a parallel initiative known as the "Cyprus process" visited New York to explain its activities. On 15 September, this group convened its fourth meeting in Cyprus, at which the mechanism to convene a grand national assembly inside Afghanistan was discussed. Over 70 Afghan intellectuals participated in the two-day conference, to which the United Nations and a number of Member States sent observers. While invitations were extended to both the Taliban and the United Front, neither sent a representative to the gathering. From 4 to 6 October, the Council for Peace and National Unity of Afghanistan, a group which has links with the Rome process, convened in Bonn, with the assistance of the German Government, to discuss practical ways to accelerate the convening of an emergency *loya jirga*, in accordance with the peace initiative of the ex-King Zahir Shah.

Initiative of the Organization of the Islamic Conference

45. As mentioned in my previous reports, the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mohammed Khatami, in his capacity as Chairman of OIC, launched a diplomatic initiative in February 2000. OIC invited the United Front and the Taliban to Jeddah, Saudi

Arabia, for two rounds of separate talks with the OIC mission, from 7 to 9 March and again from 8 to 10 May, with a view to convening eventual face-to-face negotiations between the two sides. My Personal Representative attended these meetings on behalf of the United Nations as an observer. Prior to the first meeting I met personally with the members of an OIC delegation when they visited New York on 1 March to explain the initiative.

46. The OIC talks concluded with an agreement for a comprehensive exchange of prisoners of war between the two sides, to be conducted through the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). To my regret, the process for the prisoner exchange was interrupted by the fighting that broke out early in July. Nevertheless, the two sides have continued with an informal exchange of smaller groups of prisoners.

Initiative by Turkmenistan

47. In late August, the Special Envoy for Afghanistan of the President of Turkmenistan, Boris Shikhmuradov, who had earlier visited the Islamic Republic of Iran, paid a visit to Kandahar to meet Mullah Omar and subsequently travelled to Islamabad where he was received by General Musharraf. Later, Mr. Shikhmuradov proceeded to Dushanbe to hold talks with Ahmad Shah Massoud. During his discussions with the two belligerents, the Turkmen envoy suggested that the two sides agree to a long-term ceasefire, proposing Massoud be given authority to run the north-eastern sector of the country in return for accepting the overall authority of the "Islamic Emirate" in Afghanistan. It would appear that both the Taliban and the United Front declined the suggestion.

D. Activities of the "six plus two" group and the Group of Twenty-One

48. My Personal Representative held a meeting of the "six plus two" group in Islamabad on 22 May. On 30 May, he convened another meeting in Islamabad of the Group of Twenty-One, a larger group of Governments with influence in Afghanistan, which had not met since June 1998. The Group of Twenty-One comprises China, Egypt, France, Germany, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Netherlands, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and Uzbekistan, as well as OIC.

49. In the light of the intensifying fighting and the worsening humanitarian situation, I decided to convene a meeting of the "six plus two" group on 15 September at the level of foreign ministers. The meeting, the second of its kind following the first ministerial meeting in September 1998, ended with the adoption of a statement (A/55/393-S/2000/875, annex), requesting my Personal Representative to enter into contact with all relevant Afghan parties and to report back to the group on the outcome of his contacts.

50. As agreed at the 15 September meeting, the "six plus two" group held another meeting, this time at the level of deputy foreign ministers, on 3 November, in order to receive a report from my Personal Representative on his contacts with all relevant Afghan parties regarding their willingness to agree to a ceasefire and enter into negotiations to bring about a political solution in Afghanistan. In its concluding statement (see annex), the group welcomed the written agreement communicated by the two warring parties in letters to my Personal Representative to enter into a process of dialogue, without preconditions and through the intermediation of the Secretary-General or his Personal Representative, aimed at achieving a political solution to the conflict. The group in particular noted the commitment of the two sides to negotiate in good faith and not to unilaterally abandon the negotiating process until the agenda, to be agreed by the two sides, has been exhausted. It requested my Personal Representative to report to the group by 1 February 2001 on the progress achieved in the process of dialogue by the two warring factions.

51. Based on the particular interest of the "six plus two" group, a meeting was convened on 28 February in New York in order to discuss the issue of illicit drugs emanating from Afghanistan. The meeting, which was also attended by senior counter-narcotics experts from the capitals of the "six plus two" group members, was co-chaired by Kieran Prendergast, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, and Pino Arlacchi, Executive Director of the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention. The subsequent activities of the group in this regard will be described in the humanitarian section of the present report.

IV. Humanitarian activities and human rights

52. The conditions under which assistance is provided in Afghanistan have become progressively more complicated as the year has progressed. The principles of assistance programming, as defined by the Strategic Framework for Afghanistan, have been regularly challenged by actions taken by the Taliban authorities. Throughout, the assistance community has maintained its commitment to the people of Afghanistan through the provision of assistance while at the same time continuing dialogue with the Taliban authorities. However, issues of principle remain, such as the restriction on the employment of Afghan women by the United Nations and NGOs outside the health sector, as well as the contents of a statute issued by the Taliban authorities which lays out regulations governing the activities of United Nations agencies and programmes. Both constitute major setbacks in the process of constructive engagement with the Taliban. The United Nations has made it clear to the authorities that discrimination on the basis of gender is unacceptable. The United Nations humanitarian community, under the leadership of the Coordinator's office, and with the assistance of Member States through the Afghanistan Support Group, continues to seek acceptable resolution of these issues.

53. The provision of assistance to Afghans by the United Nations and by international and national NGOs has, for the second year, followed a principled approach consistent with the Strategic Framework for Afghanistan. The assistance community attempts to make best use of all available resources through a principled common programme. The programme, presented in the Consolidated Appeal for 2000, addresses the priority needs to: (a) alleviate human suffering; (b) protect and advance human rights; (c) provide minimum basic social services; (d) build sustainable livelihoods by empowering Afghans; and (e) support the return of refugees. To date, the international community has provided approximately $150 million, of which $140 million was in direct response to the needs presented within the framework of the Consolidated Appeal, representing 48 per cent of the total requested.

54. In some parts of the country, implementation of assistance programmes has been hampered by restrictions on access to those in need of humanitarian assistance and constrained by high levels of insecurity. Although the United Nations was able to negotiate a cross-line operation to provide for some 60,000 conflict-related displaced in the Panjshir Valley in early December 1999, no further agreements were obtained from the authorities for the continuation of such operations during 2000. Similar difficulties were experienced in obtaining access to the communities in northern Hazarajat affected by conflict, drought and economic blockade during the second quarter of the year, although the authorities did allow for some assistance to reach those in Samangan and Dar-e-souf during August. The United Nations Coordinator's office continues to advocate that the authorities give greater respect to the right of civilians to humanitarian assistance.

55. Security conditions away from the frontlines and zones of conflict have been adequate for the implementation of humanitarian programmes, although volatility remains. However, the tragic murder in August of seven Afghan workers of the United Nations-supported mine awareness programme by an unidentified armed band in western Afghanistan confirmed the everyday risks faced by humanitarian personnel.

56. Socio-economic conditions in Afghanistan have deteriorated significantly. A combination of the war economy, the effects of drought and restrictions on transit trade with Pakistan are compounding the vulnerability of the majority of Afghans. The prolonged conflict and the resultant anarchy has left hundreds of thousands of Afghans chronically dependent on international assistance for their survival. The provision of food, shelter, health care and other services by the assistance community is recognized as an essential lifeline for many.

57. Those displaced by fighting, and recently by the effects of the drought, are of particular concern to the humanitarian community; the most vulnerable are being supported by food provided by the World Food Programme (WFP). Populations displaced by fighting in 1999 remain in Kabul, the Panjshir Valley and in various locations in the north and east of the country. Ongoing fighting in the central and northern regions is adding to these numbers. Approximately 134,000 displaced persons are in a situation of acute vulnerability as a consequence of conflict. Their critical needs are being addressed by emergency

assistance programmes implemented by NGOs supported and coordinated by the United Nations.

58. As predicted in reports at the end of 1999, the combination of successive dry winters and strict border controls has exacerbated food insecurity for most Afghans. The current drought conditions are considered the worst in 40 years and have affected both crop and livestock production dramatically. The crop assessment reports of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and WFP estimate cereal production for 2000 at 1.82 million metric tons, representing a reduction of 44 per cent relative to 1999 and 53 per cent relative to 1998. Reduced fodder availability, water shortages and distress sales have decreased animal holdings by 50 to 100 per cent across the country. FAO estimates that 300,000 metric tons of wheat seed is planted annually in Afghanistan. This year there is an estimated minimum deficit of 60,000 metric tons of seed as a result of either widespread production failure, forced consumption for food or poorly formed grains that will not germinate.

59. In June, the United Nations and its partners presented a funding request to implement a strategy to address the additional needs caused by the drought. The strategy focused on providing assistance in situ to the most vulnerable populations in order to stabilize communities and avoid migration. The success of the strategy has been contingent on access and the extent to which additional resources have been made available by donors. In September, a large number of families from the severely drought-affected and remote districts of Ghor, Badghis and Faryab provinces began to arrive in Herat, the main urban centre in the west. Currently, some 40,000 people displaced by drought are in Herat. The assistance community is mobilizing all available resources to cater for their shelter, food, water and sanitation needs. There is disturbing evidence that more people are leaving their homes in a desperate attempt to survive the effects of the drought. While food has been made available, the lack of cash for non-food items and support for food assistance programmes are hampering the response effort. The international donor community is urged to respond generously to the requests of the United Nations and its partners to limit the extent of this crisis.

60. In addition to the emergency food aid provided in response to need caused by drought, WFP has allotted a total of 115,800 tons of food commodities for around 1.5 million food-insecure people. WFP assistance focused on the urban poor living in Kabul, Jalalabad and Mazar. Around 485,000 people, mostly from female-headed households and the disabled, are regularly provided with highly subsidized breads.

61. Early this year, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) successfully negotiated an agreement with the Islamic Republic of Iran for the repatriation of Afghan refugees. Since the implementation of the joint programme in April, forcible return of Afghan refugees from the Islamic Republic of Iran has decreased drastically to several thousands (from 70,000 in 1999) and contributed significantly to increased protection of Afghan refugees who are unable or unwilling to return. On the other hand, the number of Afghan refugees who returned voluntarily from Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran has doubled compared to 1999. Between January and the end of September 2000, a total of 170,000 Afghan refugees returned voluntarily with the assistance of UNHCR, WFP and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) (70,000 from Pakistan, 100,000 from the Islamic Republic of Iran). Repatriation to drought-affected areas and zones of conflict has not been encouraged.

62. Initial reintegration assistance has been provided on a continual basis throughout 2000. This has included the provision of transport, individual household support, potable water and emergency shelter construction, in addition to programmes of education, health and income generation. This support has specifically targeted women and other vulnerable segments of the returnee population.

63. The United Nations specialized agencies, along with NGO partners, have conducted priority health activities throughout 2000. These include human resource development, integrated disease control activities and safe motherhood and water and sanitation programmes. Unprecedented outbreaks of meningitis and falciparum malaria related to climatic changes were seen in the central highlands, while hemorraghic fever reported in the west was likely associated with animal flocks displaced due to the drought. Responding to these outbreaks from contingency supplies with simultaneous negligible donations of emergency medical aid has meant that the current response capacity cannot cope with the threat of expanding populations of internally displace persons in the west, due to the drought, and in the north due to the conflict.

64. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), WHO and a wide range of NGOs supported the national immunization days during May and June and October and November 2000. During the spring round about 5.3 million children under 5 were vaccinated against polio, the highest coverage since 1994. WHO has also carried out malaria and tuberculosis control programmes.

65. The Poverty Eradication and Community Empowerment Programme of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) assumes a direct and an indirect correlation between peace-building and conflict prevention on the one hand and community empowerment and poverty eradication on the other. Operating in both rural and urban environments, in line with traditional Afghan social structures, the programme has successfully established and strengthened over 2,000 multiethnic community-based organizations and interest groups that have formed sustainable linkages in terms of reconciliation, peace-building, good governance and refugee reintegration. Implementing projects through the United Nations Office for Project Services, FAO and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), the programme has contributed substantially to the aid community's collective efforts in the field of food security, access to basic social services and to livelihood opportunities.

66. Afghanistan continues to rank as one of the most severely landmine-contaminated countries in the world. Currently, 720 square kilometres of land are known to contain landmines. Out of this, 340 square kilometres are considered as high priority mined areas, which have a direct adverse impact on the lives of the Afghan population, while the remaining 380 square kilometres are in low priority areas. Assessment of the landmine and unexploded ordnance threat is continuous and ongoing.

67. Since its inception in 1989 and as at October, the Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan has been able to clear 518 square kilometres of mined and battlefield areas contaminated by unexploded ordnance. Of the total areas cleared, 79 square kilometres were cleared in 2000 alone. There have also been significant inroads in the survey of mine and battlefield areas; over 619 square kilometres have been covered. Mine awareness training and materials have been provided to over 6.8 million Afghans.

68. Funding for mine action peaked in 1998, allowing for continued programme growth, but decreased substantially in 1999 and 2000. The severe shortfall of $3.5 million for the activities of the Mine Action Programme for the period from September through December 2000 forced the programme to suspend its staff on two months' leave without pay and to freeze staff salaries and increments. As a further consequence, only 64 per cent of the sites targeted for clearance will be cleared in 2000.

Narcotics

69. Afghanistan remains the world's largest supplier of opium. While the area under opium poppy cultivation had doubled in the 1998/99 season as compared to the previous year, this year's survey shows a slight decline of 10 per cent from 91,000 hectares in 1999 to around 82,000 hectares this year. This figure, however, does not live up to the Taliban decree of September 1999 to reduce opium poppy cultivation by one third in the 1999/00 planting season.

70. This year's harvest, on the other hand, has fallen by 28 per cent from a record of 4,581 tons of opium in 1999 to 3,275 tons this year, mainly due to the severe drought. The cultivation of opium poppy is concentrated in fairly distinct areas of Afghanistan, with 92 per cent of opium poppy cultivation in only six of Afghanistan's 30 provinces. An alternative development pilot programme of the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention has focused on three target areas and has reduced the opium harvest this year by 50 per cent in Ghorak, Khakrez and Maiwand districts. This has demonstrated that alternative development is the right strategy for illicit crop reduction in the Afghan context. Lack of funds for the alternative development pilot programme may lead to a lack of credibility in the future and jeopardize the sustainability of the poppy reduction achieved in the target districts in 2000.

71. Meanwhile, on 28 July 2000, the Taliban supreme leader, Mullah Omar, issued a total ban on opium poppy cultivation in the forthcoming planting season. The Taliban authorities have declared that Afghanistan's drug problems could only be solved if the international community assisted in the implementation of the decree.

72. Given the continuing war in Afghanistan, it is recognized that institutional support for law

enforcement within the country is not practicable. However, since the increasing drug trafficking from Afghanistan poses a serious global threat, the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention has initiated a drug law enforcement programme in the countries around Afghanistan, a "security belt", aimed at containing at the regional level a problem having its source in Afghanistan. This is being achieved through the promotion of coordinated drug control efforts by China, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, which surround Afghanistan along a 5,000 kilometre border.

73. The commitment of the "six plus two" group to address the illicit drug problem in Afghanistan and its implications for the region and beyond was also demonstrated at the "six plus two" high-level meeting in New York on 28 February 2000. The President of the Security Council subsequently encouraged the "six plus two" group to address drug-related issues in a coordinated manner, with the support of the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention. It also urged other Member States to help strengthen the drug control capacities of countries bordering Afghanistan.

74. In May, the Office, experts from the "six plus two" group and donor countries met in Vienna to endorse the formulation of a regional action plan intended to promote an exchange of information, the interdiction of cross-border drug shipments and control of chemicals used to produce drugs, as well as the elimination of illicit crops in Afghanistan and subsequent alternative development activities. The United Nations common programming approach in Afghanistan was particularly emphasized as an appropriate framework to ensure that assistance was consistent with the goal of opium poppy elimination. The regional action plan was approved by the "six plus two" group at its meeting in New York on 13 September.

Human rights

75. During this past year, Afghans have continued to suffer a wide range of deprivations, violations, policies and practices that severely restrict or deny their human rights. The war continues to be the most harmful and significant factor impinging on the rights of Afghans. The accumulated and direct effects of conflict, compounded by extreme poverty and profound underdevelopment, contribute to a situation that has resulted in Afghans being amongst those who are least able to enjoy their rights, including the right to life.

76. I have pointed to the alarming statistics and socio-economic indicators that provide some insight into the limited enjoyment of human rights by Afghans in previous reports. The drought, coupled with conflict and crippling poverty, has, without question, exacerbated an already bad situation, particularly in terms of the right to food, health and adequate shelter. The need to cut back on mine action activities due to inadequate funding is likely to further threaten the right to life of mine-affected communities.

77. Policies and practices that are widespread in Afghanistan, particularly in relation to women and girls, are a continuous cause of grave concern. As indicated in my previous reports, the situation of women and girls remained dismal, due to both the unconscionable policies of the Taliban and the general decline in socio-economic indicators. The firman issued by the Taliban authorities in July restricting the employment of Afghan women by the United Nations and NGOs, with the exception of the health sector, is a clear violation of the right to work and to an adequate standard of living. This firman constitutes an unacceptable precedent and undermines the ability of aid agencies to reach those who are most vulnerable and marginalized in Afghan society. The United Nations Human Rights Coordinator, in consultation with the aid community, is pursuing this matter with the Taliban authorities. Aid agencies continue to pursue activities specifically designed to address the problem as well as the ramifications of gender discrimination.

78. Afghans in frontline areas have been subjected repeatedly to indiscriminate bombing and the indiscriminate use of landmines. Populations from frontline communities have fled in large numbers from each battle zone, as civilians are all too aware that their rights as non-combatants are frequently violated. Gross violations of human rights include summary executions, including an alleged mass killing of detainees in Samangan in May. Civilians, including women, have been arbitrarily detained in conditions that are described as cruel and inhumane. There are numerous reports of Taliban troops deliberately destroying, burning and looting homes and assets essential for survival. The deliberate targeting and harming of civilians has a long history in the Afghan conflict and points to the urgent need to hold accountable those who are responsible for such heinous

crimes. Reports about summary executions, arbitrary detention and forced labour of those in detention camps remain of great concern.

79. It can only be regretted that the Taliban movement continues to deny access to the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan, Kamal Hossain. His latest report (A/55/346) highlights the alarming situation regarding human rights in Afghanistan.

V. Observations and conclusions

80. This has been an exceptionally difficult year for most Afghans. The country is facing a combination of war, with its direct and accumulated effects, widespread poverty exacerbated by the worst drought in 30 years, continued gross violations of human rights, and the destruction and criminalization of the economy, with the result that most Afghans are reduced to eking out a "bare bones" existence. The situation is likely to deteriorate dramatically over the winter months and throughout next year.

81. Developments in Afghanistan throughout 2000 have given little ground for optimism. Once again, we have witnessed with dreary familiarity a major military offensive late this past summer, with all the consequent displacement and suffering of the civilian population. And once again, I must note the continued involvement on the side of each warring faction of external players of various sorts. It is deeply distressing that a significant number of non-Afghan personnel, largely from Pakistani *madrassahs*, are not only taking active part in the fighting, most, if not all, on the side of the Taliban, and there also appears to be outside involvement in the planning and logistical support of their military operations. This as well as other forms of interference by certain governments in the internal affairs of Afghanistan enable and encourage both factions to pursue their military aims.

82. The recent Taliban decree imposing, for the first time, a total ban on opium poppy cultivation in the territory under its control is an encouraging development that deserves a positive response. However, this step was offset by other actions of the Taliban such as the edict against the employment of Afghan women. It is most regrettable to note that despite some limited improvements, women and girls have continued to face serious abuses of their fundamental rights, including severe restrictions imposed on their participation in public life.

83. I deeply deplore the Taliban's failure so far to comply, one year after its adoption, with the Security Council's demand that it turn over Osama bin Laden under the terms laid down in paragraph 2 of resolution 1267 (1999). Nor has any progress been apparent in the investigation of the murders of the Iranian diplomatic and consular staff in Mazar-e-Sharif. I also regret that no visible progress has been achieved in the past year towards bringing the perpetrators of the murder of Lieutenant Colonel Calo, the military adviser of the Special Mission, to trial.

84. The United Nations country team for Afghanistan and its NGO partners continue their efforts to alleviate the problems faced by the Afghan people and to provide the needed assistance to improve the dire humanitarian situation. However, funding for the Consolidated Appeal for Afghanistan, and specifically for the drought appeal, has reached only around 50 per cent of the amount needed. The critically important mine clearance and anti-narcotics programmes have also been affected by inadequate funding. I call again upon the international community to respond generously in order to safeguard the continuation of this vital work.

85. The agreement by the Taliban and the United Front on 2 November to enter into a process of dialogue without preconditions, under United Nations auspices, in order to bring to an end the Afghan conflict by political means, provides a glimmer of hope in this otherwise grim scenario. While skepticism as to its long-term perspective may be warranted, given the past record of false beginnings and dashed hopes, the agreement does mark the first time that the two warring sides have committed themselves in writing to seek a political settlement through an uninterrupted process of negotiations under United Nations auspices from which neither side is to withdraw until all the items on the agenda, to be agreed by themselves, have been exhausted.

86. The agreement is purely procedural in nature and thus constitutes only a first step in what will be at best a long and difficult journey towards peace. For it to develop the required momentum and have a chance of success, I must count on the support of the Security Council and the General Assembly, not to mention the

authentic cooperation of the "six plus two" group. Only in this way, and through a carefully calibrated and timely mix of incentives and disincentives, will it be possible to generate and sustain the necessary political will within the two parties, help them overcome their deep mutual mistrust and motivate them to proceed with due flexibility and speed in addressing the issues that lie at the core of the Afghan conflict. One such incentive ought to be the elaboration of a plan by the international financial and development institutions, with the support of donor countries, for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Afghanistan. Such an initiative would provide the Afghans with a ray of hope for a better future and also help ensure the durability of any peace settlement.

87. I am pleased to note that the atmosphere within the "six plus two" group has markedly improved in the course of the year, even if much remains to be done to ensure greater cohesion among its members. The regional action plan on drugs that has been adopted by the "six plus two" group is a useful step towards achieving the political cohesion among its members essential for the ultimate objective of the group — to help settle the Afghan conflict through political negotiations. My Personal Representative and I shall endeavour, in our contacts, to foster a realization that their legitimate interests in Afghanistan will best be served by simultaneously ending their support for one or the other faction and by encouraging the establishment of a unified government in Afghanistan that is a genuine reflection of the aspirations of the Afghan people. Throughout history, countries in the region enjoyed peace and prosperity only when Afghanistan was peaceful under a unified government and could play its natural role as a bridge between the countries of south, west and central Asia.

88. Any lasting settlement must also involve the participation of non-belligerent Afghans, from both inside and outside Afghanistan, for the shaping of Afghanistan's future cannot be left solely to those who brandish weapons. In this context, I greatly value the initiative by the former King, Zahir Shah, whose figure is held in high regard in Afghanistan, to convene an emergency *loya jirga* inside the country as a means of mobilizing and giving voice to important sectors of the Afghan population.

89. This year has seen a considerable strengthening of UNSMA's role and presence on the ground in Afghanistan. UNSMA, with its full complement of political officers on board, has opened a liaison office in Tehran and re-established its political presence in Kabul. Both offices are headed by senior political officers. The political work of the Special Mission is likely to increase in the months to come, particularly if, as we must hope, the current efforts being pursued by my Personal Representative evolve into substantive negotiations. At that point UNSMA would have to develop a sharply increased diplomatic capacity and it is for this purpose that I intend to strengthen the Mission's political staff.

90. While I regret the refusal of the Taliban authorities to receive the Special Rapporteur, I am gratified that the Civil Affairs Unit is now in place and functioning and has been able to count on the cooperation of both warring sides. It has quickly proved its usefulness, both in terms of building a relationship of trust with provincial and local authorities as well as other local leaders, and of apprising the Head of Mission of developments in Afghanistan, including human rights aspects. The Unit should reach its full strength by the beginning of 2001 and will be tasked to pay particular attention to strengthening its ties with Afghan civil society in the year ahead.

91. Throughout the year, UNSMA's military component has succeeded in establishing solid contacts with the military authorities of both warring factions, as well as providing reliable and informative support to the Head of Mission. I should like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to Brigadier General Jan Gunnar Isberg (Sweden), who has just left the Mission after one year's service as Senior Military Adviser, for his dedication, hard work and initiative. It is in view of the benefits brought to the Mission by the fruitful interaction between its political and military components that I intend to revert to the situation that prevailed until late last year, by increasing the number of military advisers from two to four.

92. While there has been a measure of attention paid to Afghanistan this year, the tendency persists to see Afghanistan as a series of compartmentalized problems, be they narcotics, terrorism or refugees, and to seek to solve them in isolation rather than through a comprehensive approach. It is to be hoped that the Security Council and the General Assembly will set for themselves clear and achievable objectives in Afghanistan and that their resolutions and decisions will be guided by the principle of effectiveness in

achieving those goals and taken in the context of, rather than being a substitute for, a comprehensive strategy to bring about a lasting solution to the Afghan conflict.

Annex

Statement of the "six plus two" group

3 November 2000

A high-level meeting of the "six plus two" group took place on 3 November 2000 at United Nations Headquarters, as agreed by their Foreign Ministers and other senior representatives at their high-level meeting on 15 September 2000, to receive a report from the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General on his contacts with all relevant Afghan parties regarding their willingness to agree to a ceasefire and enter into negotiations to bring about a political solution in Afghanistan.

The members of the "six plus two" group took note of the contacts established during this period by the Personal Representative with the Taliban and the United Front, as well as with non-belligerent Afghan groups. They welcomed the written agreement communicated by the two warring parties in letters to the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to enter into a process of dialogue, without preconditions and through the intermediation of the Secretary-General or his Personal Representative, aimed at achieving a political solution to the conflict in Afghanistan. They in particular noted the commitment of the two sides to negotiate in good faith and not to unilaterally abandon the negotiating process until the negotiating agenda has been exhausted.

The "six plus two" members remained committed to a peaceful political settlement of the Afghan conflict, in accordance with relevant provisions of resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and the Security Council of the United Nations. They urged the two parties to cooperate closely with the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General in moving the process forward in its shortest possible time and expressed renewed commitment to continue to work closely with and in support of the Secretary-General and his Personal Representative to assist in establishing a meaningful agenda that will address the issues at the core of the Afghan conflict. They expressed grave concern about the recent offensives in Afghanistan and the negative humanitarian consequences, and reiterated that there is no military solution. They encouraged other efforts, particularly those of the Afghan people, in support of United Nations activities to achieve a peaceful settlement in Afghanistan.

The signatories to the Tashkent Declaration on Fundamental Principles for a Peaceful Settlement of the Conflict in Afghanistan (A/54/174-S/1999/812, annex) reaffirmed the principles contained in that Declaration and reiterated that its realization would contribute significantly to the promotion of peace in Afghanistan. Turkmenistan expressed its dissenting position.

The "six plus two" group requested the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to report to the group by 1 February 2001 on the progress achieved in the process of dialogue agreed by the two warring sides.

United Nations A/55/634–S/2000/1108

General Assembly
Security Council

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20 November 2000

Original: English

General Assembly
Fifty-fifth session
Agenda item 164
Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Security Council
Fifty-fifth year

Letter dated 20 November 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I wish to draw your attention to a reprehensible act of terrorism that was perpetrated today near Kfar Darom, south of Gaza.

Just past 7.30 a.m. local time, a bus carrying 30 schoolchildren and their chaperones left Kfar Darom heading towards a school in nearby Gush Katif. About 300 metres outside Kfar Darom, a bomb was exploded by three Palestinian terrorists. Two civilians, Miriam Amitai, a teacher, and Gavriel Biton, a maintenance person at the school, were killed in the attack. At least 10 others were injured, including children as young as 7 years of age, some of them critically. This heinous assault, which deliberately targeted innocent children, was carried out by members of the Tanzim paramilitary group from the circles closest to Chairman Arafat.

The Government of Israel holds the Palestinian Authority fully responsible for this attack. The international community has the responsibility to call upon Chairman Arafat to fulfil his obligations to halt attacks against innocent civilians and to disarm the Tanzim. Terrorist attacks and bombings aimed at Israelis have continued unabated, in violation of the Sharm Al-Sheikh understanding and other key agreements, which require Chairman Arafat to act immediately to bring about their cessation.

Regrettably, this recent act of terror serves as proof of Arafat's lack of credibility in claiming to combat Palestinian violence. We renew our call to the Palestinian leadership to comply with their repeated commitments to halt the terrorism and violence and to resume negotiations to achieve a peaceful and lasting settlement.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 164, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yehuda **Lancry**
Permanent Representative

00-75549 (E) 201100

United Nations A/55/635

General Assembly

Distr.: General
21 November 2000
English
Original: Russian

Fifty-fifth session
Agenda item 73
General and complete disarmament

Letter dated 20 November 2000 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the statement of 19 November 2000 by the President of the Russian Federation, V. V. Putin, on the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (see annex). I should be grateful if the text of this letter and its annex were distributed as an official document of the General Assembly under agenda item 73.

(Signed) S. **Lavrov**

00-75698 (E) 271100 271100

Annex to the letter dated 20 November 2000 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement by the President of the Russian Federation, V. V. Putin, on the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe

19 November marks the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, a document which plays a key role in strengthening European security.

For the first time in history, an effective control regime for conventional weapons has been established to cover the entire continent, and an unprecedented degree of openness has been achieved in the military sphere. The Treaty has made it possible to carry out a rapid and balanced reduction in a large quantity of surplus armaments and equipment, which came into the possession of the States parties as a legacy of the cold war period. It has helped us to survive without upheaval the epoch-making changes which have taken place in the military and political landscape of Europe over the past decade.

It may be said without exaggeration that throughout these past 10 years, threats to the very existence of the Treaty have been ever-present. They are still with us today. It is important that the States parties should continue to demonstrate their concern to preserve the regime of controls on conventional weapons, and should not put it to any dangerous tests. I have in mind attempts to undermine stability in the area of nuclear weapons, an ill-considered bloc-oriented policy, the use of force in circumvention of the Security Council or other acts which go against the security interests of the partners in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

If due account is taken of these interests, the parties to the Treaty can find a way out of the most difficult situations. One of the most recent examples is the events in Chechnya. The Russian Federation greatly appreciates the understanding with which the forced measures that we took to counteract large-scale terrorist aggression, leading to the flank limitations being temporarily exceeded, have been met.

Unfortunately, the situation in the Northern Caucasus is still complex. In these circumstances, taking account of the obligations assumed a year ago, we are doing everything possible to secure maximum transparency in our actions to defend the State interests of the Russian Federation. In no sense are these actions intended to encroach upon the national security of the countries of the region; on the contrary, they are aimed at gradually reducing the quantity of armaments and equipment which are temporarily in the region and which fall under the Treaty limitations.

We confirm the Russian Federation's adherence to all the Treaty obligations, including the flank limitations, to which we will definitely return when the counter-terrorist operations have been completed.

In accordance with the bilateral agreements reached at Istanbul, and with the interested support of our partners under the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in

Europe, the problems of withdrawing Russian forces from the territory of Georgia and the Trans-Dniester region are in the process of being solved.

I am certain that the early entry into force of the Agreement on adapting the Treaty will strengthen its vitality and make it an effective instrument for ensuring the security of the continent in the twenty-first century. There are no reasons for dragging out the process of ratifying the adapted Treaty. This is our firm position. We are completing the preparations for submitting this document for ratification by the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. We have no doubt that the deputies will support it.

In a few weeks humanity will be entering the new millennium. I should like to wish all Treaty partners peace and concord, and to the Treaty itself many years of life, for the benefit of enhanced security in Europe.

Moscow, the Kremlin
19 November 2000

United Nations A/55/636

General Assembly

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21 November 2000

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Fifty-fifth session
Agenda items 92, 100, 154 and 158

Macroeconomic policy questions

Globalization and interdependence

Progressive development of the principles and norms of international law relating to the new international economic order

Report of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law on the work of its thirty-third session

Letter dated 20 November 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the Declaration of Itacuruçá, adopted during the 2000 Info-Ethics Seminar of governmental experts from Latin America and the Caribbean, held at Itacuruçá, Rio de Janeiro, on 26 and 27 October 2000, under the auspices of the Government of Brazil and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 92, 100, 154 and 158.

(*Signed*) Gelson **Fonseca**, Jr.
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations

00-75757 (E) 281100

Annex to the letter dated 20 November 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English]

Itacuruçá Declaration
27 October, 2000

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN'S RECOMMENDATIONS TO UNESCO'S III INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON CYBERSPACE'S ETHICAL, LEGAL AND SOCIETAL CHALLENGES

The InfoEthics 2000 Latin American and Caribbean governmental experts Consultative Meeting on "The Right to Universal Access to Information in the 21st Century: Ethical, Legal and Societal Challenges posed by the Information Society to Latin America and the Caribbean" was convened under the auspices of UNESCO and the Government of Brazil in Itacuruçá, Rio de Janeiro State, on 26 and 27 October, 2000.

Taking into account the aspirations expressed in the Florianópolis Declaration, particularly, the shared desire of Latin American and Caribbean countries to reach the year 2005, integrated as full-fledged members of the information society with efficiency, equity and sustainability, within the framework of a global economy based on knowledge and as a result of their discussions, the governmental representatives from the 18 participating countries (listed in Annex) decided to adopt the following Declaration, which will be proffered as the region's contribution to UNESCO's III International Congress on Cyberspace's Ethical, Legal and Societal Challenges:

CONSIDERING

1. The risk that current transformations caused by information and communication technologies may lead to deepen social inequalities within countries, as well as to widen the international asymmetry between developed and developing countries, the right to economic and social development, understood to be the democratic access to Knowledge Society, becomes the main contemporary ethical challenge posed by the Information Society.

2. The State's indispensable role in promoting universal access of its peoples to the benefits of the Information Society.

3. That the rights to education and access to culture [Articles 26 (1,2) & 27 (1)], as well as intellectual property rights [Article 27 (2)], inasmuch as all are human rights, must be understood as complementary to each other.

4. That access to information in cyberspace is an imperative social goal.

5. That tutelage of intellectual property constitutes a stimulus to the promotion of creativity and cultural industry.

6. That fair use or legitimate use, within the framework of copyright laws, is that which enables access to intellectual property, inasmuch as normal exploitation is not injured nor is unjustified harm caused to the author's legitimate rights.

7. That intellectual property rights treaties allow for the introduction of specific exceptions in benefit of the public good.

8. That the protection of information is not sufficiently guaranteed in Latin America and the Caribbean and that the privacy of personal data should be respected as an integral part of human rights.

9. That digital networks and information and communication technologies offer new opportunities for the expression of thought.

RECOMMEND

1. Adopting special policies and actions that favour developing countries with the aim of bridging the digital divide.

2. Strengthening those laws bearing on digital information, with a particular focus on fulfilling the requirements for the development of education, science and culture, within an adequate ethical framework for the Information Society.

3. The support of international organisations, within their areas of competence, to the efforts conducted by Member States to promote the construction of a communications infrastructure and Infostructure, covering their respective territories, which are available to all their population.

4. That Member States stimulate the production of local and national contents for public use to foster education, science and culture.

5. That Member States, with the support of competent international organisations, foster the creation of a regional information space for public use, to advance the development and integration of Latin American and Caribbean societies, increasing their visibility in the global information society.

6. That Member States tailor national legislation that does not embrace or include fair use to include and apply fair use to cyberspace. Additionally, that those national laws which do apply fair use broaden their range of application for the promotion of education, science and culture.

7. That Member States consider the convenience of adopting pertinent measures for the protection of human dignity within the cyberspace environment.

8. Creating a regional programme on the Information Society aimed at providing for the continuity of efforts carried out by Latin American and Caribbean countries to insert themselves fully into the digital era.

Annex

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* The list of participants is being circulated in the language of submission only.

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General Assembly

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Fifty-fifth session
Agenda item 20 (a)
Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

Scope of legal protection under the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel

Report of the Secretary-General*

I. Introduction

1. The discussions in the Security Council on the protection for humanitarian assistance to refugees and others in conflict situations, the protection of civilians in armed conflict, and the protection of United Nations personnel, associated personnel and humanitarian personnel in conflict zones,[1] have brought to the fore the limitations of the 1994 Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, and the inadequacy of its protective legal regime. Concerned at the rising toll of casualties among humanitarian personnel and the acts of physical violence, abduction, hostage-taking, kidnapping, harassment and illegal arrest and detention to which this personnel has been too frequently exposed, members of the Council stressed the need to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian and local personnel operating in hostile and volatile environments and deal more effectively with their protection.

2. In my report to the Security Council on the protection of civilians in armed conflict,[2] I pointed to the emerging consensus among Member States on the inadequacies of the Convention, and recommended that the Security Council invite the General Assembly to pursue the development of a protocol extending the scope of its legal protection to all United Nations and associated personnel not presently covered. Taking note of my report and of the range of views expressed by members of the Security Council during the debates on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, the General Assembly, in its resolution 54/192 of 17 December 1999, requested that I submit for its consideration, a report containing a detailed analysis and recommendations addressing the scope of legal protection under the 1994 Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel. My legal analysis of the scope of application of the 1994 Convention, which was elaborated by Member States and to which the United Nations is not a party, is without prejudice to the views of States, or the decisions of national or international jurisdictions, before which the perpetrators of any of the acts prohibited thereunder will be brought to justice.

* The present report is submitted following extensive consultations with all offices and departments concerned and an analysis of the existing practice in many field missions.

00-75777 (E) 241100

II. Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel — a legal analysis

A. Criminalization of attacks against United Nations and associated personnel

3. The Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel was adopted by the General Assembly on its resolution 49/59 on 9 December 1994 and entered into force on 15 January 1999. Forty-three States are presently Parties to the Convention, of which none is a host to a United Nations peacekeeping operation. The Convention prohibits any attack against United Nations and associated personnel, their equipment and premises, and imposes upon States parties the obligation to ensure the safety and security of such personnel, and protect them from the crimes established under the Convention (article 7). The crimes against United Nations and associated personnel are any of the following: murder, kidnapping or other attack upon the person or liberty of a United Nations and associated personnel; a violent attack upon the official premises, private accommodation or means of transportation of such personnel; a threat to commit any such act, an attempt to commit it and an act constituting participation as an accomplice in any such attack. States parties to the Convention are bound to establish these crimes in their national laws, and make them punishable, taking into account their grave nature (article 9).

4. The Convention establishes the principle of "prosecute or extradite", whereby each State party is bound to establish its jurisdiction in respect of any crime or offender, when the crime was committed in its territory, or when the offender is its national. The State of habitual residence of the offender, if he is a stateless person, or the State of nationality of the victim, may also establish its jurisdiction over any such crimes. Alternatively, if any of these States decline jurisdiction, it is bound to extradite the offender to any other State having jurisdiction in the matter.

5. Attacks against United Nations and associated personnel which were criminalized under the 1994 Convention, were internationalized under the Statute of the International Criminal Court in 1998, and made subject to the jurisdiction of the Court. Under article 8 (2) (b) (iii) and (e) (iii) of the Statute, attacks against personnel, installations, material, units or vehicles involved in a humanitarian assistance or a peacekeeping mission, as long as they are entitled to the protection given to civilians or civilian objects under the international law of armed conflict, are considered "war crimes", in respect of which individual criminal responsibility is entailed. The Rome Statute, however, is not yet in force.

B. Scope of application of the Convention to United Nations operations and United Nations and associated personnel, and its limitations

1. United Nations operations

6. The Convention is applicable to United Nations operations and United Nations and associated personnel as defined in article 1. A "United Nations operation" is an operation established by the competent organ of the United Nations in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and conducted under United Nations authority and control:

> "(i) Where the operation is for the purpose of maintaining or restoring international peace and security; or
>
> "(ii) Where the Security Council or the General Assembly has declared, for the purposes of this Convention, that there exists an exceptional risk to the safety of the personnel participating in the operation;"

7. A United Nations operation of the first category is clearly any peacekeeping operation conducted under United Nations command and control, to the exclusion of United Nations authorized operations conducted under national command and control.[3] A United Nations operation of the second category mentioned in article 1 (c) (ii) of the Convention is any other United Nations presence in a host country established by a United Nations competent organ — though not necessarily the General Assembly or the Security Council — such as, United Nations political missions, "post-conflict, peace-building offices", and United Nations humanitarian, development and human rights presences. While the Convention is automatically applicable to peacekeeping operations, its applicability to other United Nations operations is conditional upon

a "declaration" by the General Assembly or the Security Council that there exists an exceptional risk to the safety of the personnel participating in the operation. As a "trigger mechanism" for the applicability of the Convention, the "declaration" is constitutive in nature, and must be made before any of the acts prohibited under the Convention are committed.

8. In the General Assembly's debates on the Convention, a number of Member States expressed confidence that in case of a reasonable concern about the degree of risk in any given operation, a declaration would be made by the General Assembly or the Security Council expeditiously, on time and as a matter of routine. They considered that the need to obtain a declaration would not be a bar to the application of the Convention and urged the Security Council, in case of doubt, to err on the side of protection and make a pre-emptive declaration. Others expressed reservations and doubts as to the practicality of the declaration, the lack of definitional criteria and its timeliness in practice. Yet others, doubted the justification of differentiating between the automatic application of the Convention to peacekeeping operations and its conditional application in case of other United Nations operations.[4] The concerns and reservations expressed in the debates were borne out in the practice of the Organization, where a great many United Nations, non-peacekeeping operations were deployed in risky, highly volatile and dangerous environments, and in respect of which no declaration has been made by either organ. The cases of recent United Nations political and humanitarian operations in Afghanistan, Burundi and East and West Timor, to name but a few, are illustrative of the inadequacy of the present legal regime.

9. The situation in Afghanistan has been characterized in recent years by periods of rough military parity, resumption of factional hostilities and sporadic fighting. In August 1998, a military adviser serving with the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan (UNSMA), was shot and killed while driving a clearly marked United Nations vehicle. Locally recruited staff members have been publicly beaten for alleged infractions of Taliban rules. In the statement by the President of the Security Council on behalf of the Council (S/PRST/2000/12) of 7 April 2000, the Security Council reiterated its grave concern at the continued Afghan conflict. It condemned the Taliban for the repeated forced entries into and searches of United Nations premises, and for the intimidation of United Nations personnel. The Security Council demanded that the Taliban stop these unacceptable practices and ensure the safety and security of all United Nations and associated personnel and humanitarian personnel working in Afghanistan in accordance with international law.

10. The United Nations Office in Burundi (UNOB) was established in October 1993 as a confidence-building measure. In 1996, three international personnel of the International Committee of the Red Cross were murdered; in 1998 an international staff member of the World Food Programme (WFP) was murdered; and in October 1999, in the course of an inter-agency humanitarian assessment mission, two international staff members of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and WFP were brutally killed in an ambush. In a Presidential statement of 12 November 1999, the Security Council condemned the murder of United Nations personnel, and called upon the Government to undertake and cooperate with the investigations, and bring the perpetrators of the crimes to justice. In its resolution 1286 (2000) of 19 January 2000, the Security Council expressed concern at the continuing violence perpetrated by all parties, including non-State actors, and strongly condemned the murder of UNICEF and WFP personnel and Burundian civilians.

11. In its resolution 1246 (1999) of 11 June 1999 establishing the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET), the Security Council noted with concern my assessment that the security situation in East Timor remains "extremely tense and volatile". On the day of the consultations (30 August 1999), two local UNAMET staff members were murdered, and following the announcement of the results of the ballot, the security situation deteriorated and violence erupted. In the post ballot period, amidst a campaign of violence, looting and arson by pro-integration militia, five additional local UNAMET staff members were killed, and two others were declared missing. The situation in West Timor, in particular in the areas of the refugee camps, remains risky and volatile. On 6 September 2000, three international staff members of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) were murdered by a militia-led mob, during a violent rampage. In its resolution 1319 (2000), the Security Council condemned the "outrageous and contemptible" acts against unarmed

international staff who were in West Timor to help the refugees; it insisted that the Government of Indonesia take immediate steps in fulfilment of its responsibility to disarm and disband the militia, and bring to justice those responsible for the attack.

12. The foregoing cases clearly demonstrate the inadequacy of conditioning the applicability of the Convention to United Nations non-peacekeeping operations on a "declaration" of an exceptionally risky situation. In all these cases, local staff of United Nations offices, and international staff of United Nations humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organizations, were murdered, attacked or otherwise targeted, and in one case, United Nations premises were invaded. In neither of these operations, however, did any of the United Nations organs declare that there existed an exceptional risk to the safety of its personnel, though many of their pronouncements amounted to the same effect.

2. United Nations and associated personnel

13. "United Nations personnel" are defined in article 1 (a) of the Convention to mean:

> "(i) Persons engaged or deployed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations as members of the military, police or civilian components of a United Nations operation;
>
> "(ii) Other officials and experts on mission of the United Nations or its specialized agencies or the International Atomic Energy Agency who are present in an official capacity in the area where a United Nations operation is being conducted;

"'Associated personnel' are defined in article 1 (b) as:

> "(i) Persons assigned by a Government or an intergovernmental organization with the agreement of the competent organ of the United Nations;
>
> "(ii) Persons engaged by the Secretary-General of the United Nations or by a specialized agency or by the International Atomic Energy Agency;
>
> "(iii) Persons deployed by a humanitarian non-governmental organization or agency under an agreement with the Secretary-General of the United Nations or with a specialized agency or with the International Atomic Energy Agency,
>
> to carry out activities in support of the fulfilment of the mandate of a United Nations operation."

14. United Nations personnel are accordingly members of all components of a United Nations peacekeeping operation, and officials and experts on missions of the United Nations present in their official capacity in the United Nations area of operation. United Nations associated personnel are: persons assigned by States and intergovernmental organizations, persons engaged by the Secretary-General, and persons deployed by a humanitarian non-governmental organization under an agreement with the Secretary-General or a specialized agency. It is with respect to humanitarian non-governmental organizations and locally recruited personnel, that the scope of application of the Convention has been in doubt.

Personnel of humanitarian non-governmental organizations

15. Personnel of humanitarian non-governmental organizations, not belonging to the United Nations family, are entitled to the protective regime of the Convention if their deployment in the United Nations area of operation has been pursuant to an agreement with the Secretary-General or a specialized agency, and for the purpose of carrying out activities in support of the fulfilment of the mandate of a United Nations operation (article 1(b) (iii) of the Convention). While the nature and content of such an agreement has not been defined in the Convention, it would be reasonable to assume that any contractual link or a treaty arrangement institutionalizing the cooperation between the United Nations and a non-governmental organization in support of a United Nations operation or in the implementation of its mandate, would meet the requirement of article 1 (b) (iii) of the Convention. In the practice of the Organization two kinds of agreements have been concluded between the United Nations and non-governmental organizations: "Partnership agreements" between UNHCR, UNDP, UNICEF, WFP or other United Nations bodies executing humanitarian programmes, and international or local non-governmental organizations for the implementation of specific projects, and Security Arrangements between the Office of the United

Nations Security Coordinator and non-governmental organizations participating in the implementation of assistance activities of the Organization.

16. "Partnership agreements" are concluded, as a matter of routine, between the UNHCR and a large variety of humanitarian intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations for the implementation of protection and assistance projects for the benefit of refugees. A model framework agreement for operational partnership between the UNHCR and non-governmental organizations ("implementing partners") has been devised as a framework for joint humanitarian action in favour of refugees. The agreement establishes the standards of conduct for both partners, the non-discriminatory, a-political, neutral and impartial character of humanitarian assistance, modalities of consultation and cooperation and exchange of information between the partners, the Governments concerned, United Nations agencies, local leaders and refugee representatives. Similar agreements exist between other United Nations bodies and non-governmental organizations relating to assistance to internally displaced persons and other victims of conflict.

17. Similarly, UNDP, in the field of sustainable human development, collaborates with national and international non-governmental organizations having the necessary capacities in their respective fields of expertise to carry out activities on behalf of UNDP. For each project, UNDP signs an agreement with the designated organization. The standard project cooperation agreement between UNDP and the non-governmental organization sets out the general terms and conditions of cooperation between the parties in all aspects of the project, and notably, the duration of the project, the general responsibilities of the parties, the status of the personnel employed by the non-governmental organization, and financial and operational arrangements.

18. In order to bring international non-governmental organizations having the status of an "implementing partner" within the United Nations security umbrella, a memorandum of understanding between the United Nations and an intergovernmental organization/non-governmental organization implementing partner regarding coordination of security arrangements, was prepared by the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator and the Office of Legal Affairs. An "implementing partner", for the purpose of the memorandum of understanding, is any international non-governmental organization which has already entered into a contractual or a treaty arrangement with an organization of the United Nations system to implement a particular project. Under the memorandum of understanding, the United Nations undertakes to lend assistance for the protection of international staff of the implementing partner and to extend to it the application of the security plan; exchange security-related information, and in case of an emergency, provide travel assistance to the implementing partner on a reimbursable basis. The implementing partner undertakes to consult with and assist the United Nations designated official on all matters relating to security arrangements at the duty station. The memorandum of understanding on security arrangements has so far been signed by one inter-governmental organization, the International Organization for Migration, and nine non-governmental organizations in three countries.

Locally recruited personnel

19. In defining "United Nations and associated personnel", the Convention did not distinguish between international and locally recruited personnel. In peacekeeping operations, locally recruited personnel are considered "members of the civilian component of a United Nations peacekeeping operation", and in United Nations offices established away from headquarters, they are considered, with the exception of those assigned to hourly rate, as United Nations officials. In both cases, locally recruited personnel are entitled to a limited scope of privileges and immunities vis-à-vis their State of nationality; for the purposes of the Convention, however, they should be considered as falling within any of the categories of United Nations and associated personnel, according to the type of their contractual link with the organization.

III. Measures to strengthen the existing regime of the Convention

20. Pending the conclusion of a protocol extending the scope of application of the Convention to United Nations operations and categories of personnel not presently covered, three measures are suggested for the consideration of the General Assembly which, within the framework of the Convention, would strengthen its protective regime and give it full effect. They include:

(a) A procedure to initiate a "declaration" by the Security Council or the General Assembly;

(b) Designating the Secretary-General as the "certifying authority" for purposes of attesting to the fact of a "declaration" or an "agreement", and to the status of any of the United Nations and associated personnel;

(c) Incorporating the key provisions of the 1994 Convention in the status-of-forces or status of mission agreements concluded between the United Nations and States in whose territories peacekeeping operations are deployed.

A. Declaration of an exceptional risk to the safety of United Nations personnel

21. In order to give effect to the provision of article 1 (c) (ii) of the Convention and bring within the ambit of its protective regime all United Nations operations conducted in risky, dangerous or volatile environments, the Secretary-General intends to recommend to the General Assembly or the Security Council, as the case may be, that where there are sufficient warnings of immediate attacks or escalation of a conflict, a declaration that an exceptional risk exists to the safety of United Nations and associated personnel, be made. His recommendation for a declaration to that effect may be submitted at the time of the establishment of the United Nations operation, or at any time thereafter, and it should state that "the General Assembly/Security Council declares that, for the purposes of the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, there exists an exceptional risk to the safety of the personnel participating in the United Nations operation".

22. As a trigger mechanism for the application of the Convention, a declaration's major drawback is its impracticality in United Nations humanitarian operations, which are not, strictly speaking, "established" under any specific mandate, but deployed pursuant to a standing, statutory mandate. There is, therefore, no defined moment for the "establishment" of such operations which would determine the timing of a declaration and facilitate the procedure for its initiation.

B. Designating the Secretary-General as a "certifying authority"

23. Questions pertaining to the status of any victim of attack as a "United Nations or associated personnel" within the meaning of the Convention, or to whether a declaration of the Security Council or the General Assembly has been made and an agreement between a non-governmental organization and the United Nations concluded, are likely to arise in connection with an inter-State request "to prosecute or extradite", or trial proceedings before a national or an international jurisdiction. As the organ having full knowledge of the facts and an easy access to the information, the United Nations Secretariat will be required to assist States' authorities and jurisdictions in providing the necessary information. A "Secretary-General's certificate" issued upon request would attest to the fact and content of a "declaration", to the fact and content of an agreement, and to the status of a United Nations and associated personnel in question. Such a certificate should be accepted by States' authorities and jurisdictions as a proof of the facts attested therein.

C. Incorporating the Convention's key provisions into the status-of-forces or status of mission agreements

24. While the obligations under the Convention are binding upon States parties in the relationship between them, the incorporation of the Convention's key provisions in the status-of-forces agreements and status of mission agreements will ensure that such obligations are also binding upon the State in whose territory the peacekeeping operation is deployed in its relationship with the United Nations, and regardless of whether it is a party to the Convention. The obligations to prevent attacks against members of the operation, establish them as crimes punishable by law, and "prosecute or extradite" the offender, are the key provisions of the Convention which will be incorporated in future status-of-forces agreements and status of mission agreements. They would read as follows (a status-of-forces agreement is used as an example):

"(i) Obligation to prevent attacks against members of the peacekeeping operation

"The Government shall take all appropriate measures to ensure the safety and security of

members of [the United Nations peacekeeping operation]. In particular, it shall take all appropriate steps to protect members of the peacekeeping operation, their equipment and premises, from attack or any action that prevents them from discharging their mandate. This is without prejudice to the fact that all premises of the peacekeeping operation are inviolable and subject to the exclusive control and authority of the United Nations.

"(ii) Obligation to establish attacks against members of the peacekeeping operation as crimes punishable by law

"The Government shall establish the following acts as crimes under its national law, and make them punishable by appropriate penalties taking into account their grave nature:

"a. A murder, kidnapping or other attack upon the person or liberty of any member of the peacekeeping operation;

"b. A violent attack upon the official premises, the private accommodation or the means of transportation of any member of the peacekeeping operation likely to endanger his or her person or liberty;

"c. A threat to commit any such attack with the objective of compelling a physical or juridical person to do or to refrain from doing any act;

"d. An attempt to commit any such attack; and

"e. An act constituting participation as an accomplice in any such attack, or in an attempt to commit such attack, or in organizing or ordering others to commit such attack.

"(iii) Obligation to prosecute or extradite

"The Government shall establish its jurisdiction over the crimes set out in article [reference to (ii)], when the crime was committed in its territory and the alleged offender — other than a member of the peacekeeping operation — is present in its territory, unless it has extradited such person to the State of nationality of the offender, the State of his habitual residence if he is a stateless person, or the State of the nationality of the victim."

25. In incorporating the key provisions of the Convention into the status-of-forces agreements and status of mission agreements, the obligations to prevent attacks, criminalize them and "prosecute or extradite" the offender, will apply within the scope of application of the respective status-of-forces agreements and status of mission agreements and with regard to members of the United Nations peacekeeping operation only. United Nations associated personnel who are not covered under the status-of-forces agreements or the status of mission agreements will not be protected by the measure, and their unprotected status, in the circumstances, will remain.

26. In order to ensure the protection of United Nations personnel participating in other United Nations non-peacekeeping operations, a similar provision would be incorporated in host country agreements concluded between the United Nations and States in whose territories United Nations presences are deployed. In these cases as well, the applicability of the protective regime of the Convention to the United Nations personnel participating in the operation will be limited by the scope of application of the relevant agreement into which the key provisions of the Convention are incorporated.

IV. Protocol to extend the applicability of the Convention to all United Nations operations and associated personnel and humanitarian personnel not presently covered — elements for a protocol

27. The measures proposed in section III of the present report to enhance the protective regime of the Convention are of limited effect in that they do not operate to extend the scope of the protection, but only to strengthen it within the parameters of the Convention. In order to extend the scope of the Convention and ensure its automatic application to all United Nations operations and categories of personnel beyond those presently covered, a Protocol to the Convention disposing of the conditionalities of a "declaration" or an "agreement", would be required.

28. To facilitate the elaboration of a Protocol to extend the scope of application of the Convention and its protective regime to other United Nations

operations and categories of personnel not presently covered, set out for the consideration of Member States are elements for a Protocol based on the principle of automatic application of the Convention to all United Nations operations regardless of the security situation prevailing at the time and place of the attack, and to all humanitarian inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations, present in the United Nations area of operation but not necessarily linked to it, provided they carry out humanitarian relief activities in a neutral, impartial and non-discriminatory manner. In that latter respect, States may consider extending the scope of the protection even further to all such humanitarian agencies operating in an area where no United Nations presence is simultaneously deployed.

29. In order for all United Nations operations to be automatically included in the protective regime of the Convention in the same way that peacekeeping operations are, the requirement for a "declaration" as a condition for its applicability must be dispensed with. The volatile, risky or dangerous situation at the time and place of the attack should not be considered as an element of the crime, or otherwise a condition for the applicability of the Convention, as indeed it is not in the case of peacekeeping operations.

30. The provision extending the Convention to all United Nations operations may read as follows:

> "The protective regime of the Convention shall extend to all United Nations operations or presences established in a host country pursuant to a standing or a specific mandate of a United Nations competent organ, and in respect of all United Nations and associated personnel participating in such United Nations operations and presences."

31. Alternatively, and if the requirement for a "declaration" is nevertheless retained, States may wish to empower the Secretary-General, instead of or in addition to the Security Council or the General Assembly, to declare that an exceptional risk exists to the safety of United Nations personnel participating in any given operation. This would streamline the process for a declaration and ensure its timeliness. The definition of a United Nations operation under the Protocol, would accordingly read:

> "(c) 'United Nations operation' means an operation established by the competent organ of the United Nations in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and conducted under United Nations authority and control:
>
> "(ii) Where the Security Council, the General Assembly or the Secretary-General has declared, for the purposes of the Convention and the present Protocol that there exists an exceptional risk to the safety of the personnel participating in the operation."

32. In order for the Convention to apply to all personnel of humanitarian non-governmental organizations, the requirement for a contractual link between their organizations and the United Nations for the purpose of their legal protection should be dispensed with. While "implementing partnership" agreements for the implementation of a specific project would still be required in the interest of both parties and for the purpose of a more efficient and coordinated assistance, they would no longer be required as a condition for conferring upon personnel of a humanitarian inter-governmental or non-governmental organization legal protection from attack against the person, accommodation or equipment of such personnel.[5]

33. The relevant provision in the protocol may read as follows:

> "The protective regime of the Convention shall extend to all persons deployed by intergovernmental, non-governmental and other agencies engaged in a humanitarian relief operation [in the United Nations area of operation] in an independent, neutral, impartial and non-discriminatory manner."

V. Conclusions

34. In the six years that have elapsed since the adoption of the Convention the limitations of its scope of application to United Nations operations and United Nations and associated personnel, have become apparent. The Convention is not applicable to United Nations operations which have not been declared by the General Assembly or the Security Council to be exceptionally risky. In practice, no declaration has ever been made to that effect by either organ, notwithstanding the actual need for it in many United Nations operations. The Convention is also not

applicable to humanitarian non-governmental organizations which have not concluded "implementing/partnership agreements" with the United Nations or its specialized agencies, though in practice they are in no less a need for such protection. The Convention is finally not applicable, and was never intended to apply to humanitarian non-United Nations operations.

35. Pending the conclusion of a Protocol extending the scope of application of the Convention which may or may not be ratified by some or all of the States parties to the Convention, measures have been suggested which, within the parameters of the Convention, would strengthen its protective regime and give it full effect. The optimal solution remains by far a Protocol which would dispose of the need for a "declaration" in case of United Nations operations and dispense with the link between a humanitarian non-governmental organization and the United Nations as a condition for protection under the Convention.

Notes

[1] The discussions on the protection for humanitarian assistance to refugees and others in conflict situations (S/PV.3932 of 29 September 1998); the protection of civilians in armed conflict (S/PV.3977 and S/PV.3978 of 12 February 1999 and of 16 and 17 September 1999); (S/PV.4046 and (Resumption 1) and (Resumption 2); and the protection of United Nations personnel, associated personnel and humanitarian personnel in conflict zones (S/PV.4100 and S/PV.4100 (Resumption 1) of 9 February 2000). See also, Presidential statements S/PRST/1997/13, S/PRST/1998/30 and S/PRST/2000/4; General Assembly resolution 52/167 of 16 December 1997, General Assembly resolution 53/87 of 7 December 1998.

[2] A/54/619-S/1999/957.

[3] Expressly excluded from the scope of the Convention are United Nations operations authorized by the Security Council as an enforcement action under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, in which any of the personnel are engaged as combatants against armed forces and to which the law of international armed conflict applies. Members of such operations remain protected and bound by the principles and rules of international humanitarian law applicable to such conflicts. Article 20 (a) of the Convention provides in this respect that nothing in the Convention shall affect the applicability of international humanitarian law in relation to the protection of United Nations operations and United Nations and associated personnel, or the responsibility of such personnel to respect such law and standards. The exclusion from the scope of application of the Convention of Chapter VII United Nations operations carried out in situations of international armed conflict, gives rise to the suggestion that enforcement actions carried out in situations of internal armed conflict (UNOSOM II type of operations), are included within the scope of the Convention and subject to its protective regime. It will eventually be for the practice of States or any of the competent national or international jurisdictions, to clearly delineate the distinction between the mutually exclusive regimes of international humanitarian law and the protective regime of the Convention. In the final analysis, it is not the nature of the conflict which should determine the applicability of international humanitarian law or that of the Convention, but whether in any type of conflict, members of United Nations peacekeeping operations are actively engaged therein as combatants, or are otherwise entitled to the protection given to civilians under the international law of armed conflict.

[4] *United Nations General Assembly, Official Records, Forty-ninth Session*, 84th meeting, pp. 15, 17, 18-19; Ibid., *Forty-ninth Session, Sixth Committee*, 29th meeting, paras. 21, 43; Ibid., 30th meeting, para. 4.

[5] In conditioning the protection to humanitarian non-governmental organizations on an agreement with the United Nations, the Convention has, in fact, limited the protection to which they are entitled under international humanitarian law in situations of armed conflict (see article 71 of the Protocol additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the protection of victims of international armed conflicts (Protocol I), of 8 June 1977; and article 8 of the Statute of the ICC).

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General Assembly

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Fifty-fifth session
Agenda item 175
The role of diamonds in fuelling conflict

Letter dated 21 November 2000 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to transmit herewith the ministerial statement issued at the conclusion of a meeting on diamonds held in Pretoria on 21 September 2000.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 175.

(*Signed*) Dumisani S. **Kumalo**
Permanent Representative
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary

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Annex to the letter dated 21 November 2000 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Ministerial statement

Conclusions of the ministerial meeting, Pretoria, 21 September 2000

We, the ministers and representatives of the world's leading diamond exporting, processing and importing States, met in Pretoria on 21 September 2000 at the invitation of the African diamond-producing countries to agree on what we could do to break the link between the illicit trade in rough diamonds and armed conflict.

We reviewed the challenges and reached the following conclusions:

- We are concerned that the trade in conflict diamonds is prolonging wars in parts of Africa, is frustrating development efforts and is causing immense suffering. We understand conflict diamonds to be rough diamonds which are illicitly traded by rebel movements to finance their attempts to overthrow legitimate Governments;

- We recognize that conflict diamonds make up only a small fraction of the overall market for rough diamonds. The legitimate diamond trade makes a critical contribution to economic development worldwide. For this reason, we need to devise pragmatic and effective measures to address the problem of conflict diamonds while ensuring that we do not harm the legitimate diamond industry;

- We are resolved to do more and to work together to deny these conflict diamonds access to world markets, while recognizing the difficulty of devising and enforcing measures to prevent the smuggling of items that are portable, concealable, valuable and difficult to identify by source, such as diamonds.

We welcome important progress to date, in particular:

- The readiness of the Republic of South Africa and other countries participating in the conference to co-sponsor a resolution at the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly;

- The role of the Security Council in addressing this problem. We commit ourselves to the full and rigorous implementation of the various United Nations sanctions regimes targeting the link between the illicit trade in rough diamonds and the supply of weapons and fuel to rebel movements;

- The initiative of the Group of 8, in the context of its commitment to conflict prevention expressed at the summit held in Okinawa, Japan, in July 2000, to support practical approaches to the issue of conflict diamonds, including consideration of an international agreement on certification of rough diamonds;

- National initiatives, including the steps taken by the Governments of Angola and Sierra Leone, to put in place effective national certification schemes, as well as the efforts by trading and marketing centres in Belgium, Israel and India to strengthen regulation of and transparency in the trade;

- Proposed steps by industry, including the resolution agreed at the World Diamond Congress held in Antwerp, Belgium, in July 2000 to address the problem of conflict diamonds;

- The constructive role played by civil society organizations in raising public awareness on the issue of conflict diamonds, proposing practical solutions and helping generate the necessary political will required for concrete action.

We especially welcome the African initiative that led to the Kimberley process. As the first of its kind, this initiative brought together producing, processing and trading countries, and drew on the different perspectives and expertise of Governments, industry and civil society in generating ideas for workable solutions. It highlighted that the problem of conflict diamonds is of international concern and requires a comprehensive and practical approach.

We agree that:

- A comprehensive approach should be explored to deal with the causes and drivers of conflict;
- A mechanism of establishing an intergovernmental body to monitor compliance with the certification system should be investigated. This should include investigating the relationship between the intergovernmental body and the World Diamond Council;
- We take note of the report of the Working Group and commend it as a valuable contribution to future international efforts to address this problem;
- We are resolved to maintain the momentum of the Kimberley process by moving ahead into an intergovernmental process to design a workable international certification scheme for rough diamonds. We favour a simple and effective scheme that does not place an undue burden on Governments and industry, particularly smaller producers;
- We therefore welcome the initiative to convene an intergovernmental conference in London to bring in other interested States and take the multilateral process forward.

We are conscious of the need for Governments and industry to work together and to implement effective measures soon. This is necessary to curb conflicts in parts of Africa and to maintain consumer confidence vital to the well-being of the industry. We are equally conscious of the need to ensure that the diamond trade optimally contributes to sustainable development and of the importance of working towards that objective.

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General Assembly
Fifty-fifth session
Agenda items 40 and 41
The situation in the Middle East
Question of Palestine

Security Council
Fifty-fifth year

Report of the Secretary-General*

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 54/42 of 1 December 1999 on the peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine.

2. On 7 August 2000, the Secretary-General, pursuant to the request contained in paragraph 9 of the above-mentioned resolution, addressed the following letter to the President of the Security Council:

> "I have the honour to refer to resolution 54/42, which the General Assembly adopted on 1 December 1999, at its fifty-fourth session, under the agenda item 'Question of Palestine'.
>
> "In paragraph 9 of the resolution, the General Assembly '*requests* the Secretary-General to continue his efforts with the parties concerned, and in consultation with the Security Council, for the promotion of peace in the region and to submit progress reports on developments in this matter'.
>
> "In order to fulfil my reporting responsibilities under this resolution, I should be grateful if you would kindly convey to me the views of the Security Council by 29 September 2000."

3. On 29 September 2000 the following reply was received from the Security Council:

> "The members of the Security Council are following with interest the developments of the situation in the Middle East.
>
> "They welcomed the participation of the Israelis and Palestinians in the final status negotiations which were held at Camp David in July. These talks represented an important phase in the Middle East peace process. They have no doubt but that the efforts being made to smooth the differences will help bring about a just, durable and comprehensive peace, based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967 and 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973. They strongly condemn all acts of terrorism and violence in the region. They urge all parties to fully respect the commitments they have assumed under existing agreements and to refrain from any activities that might jeopardize the success of the talks and aggravate the political and economic situation in the Palestinian territories, and to acquit themselves scrupulously of their obligations under international law.

* In accordance with General Assembly resolution 54/248, section C, paragraph 1, the present report is being submitted on 22 November 2000 so as to include as much updated information as possible.

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"The members of the Security Council are more than ever determined to follow the ongoing process and to provide it with the necessary support. In that connection, they fully endorse the agreements already concluded and would like to see them promptly implemented."

4. In a note verbale dated 9 August 2000 to the parties concerned, the Secretary-General sought the positions of the Governments of Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as the Palestine Liberation Organization, regarding any steps taken by them to implement the relevant provisions of the resolution. As at 16 November 2000, the following replies had been received:

Note verbale dated 11 September 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

"As the Secretary-General is aware, Israel voted against this resolution, as well as against similar resolutions adopted by the General Assembly in previous sessions. At this particularly sensitive time in the Middle East peace process, Israel wishes to put on record, once again, its position on this matter. This response should not be construed in any way as an acceptance of the legitimacy of these resolutions.

"Israel views the aforementioned General Assembly resolution not only as being unbalanced, but also as an undue interference in matters which lie at the very core of the bilateral negotiations currently under way between Israel and the Palestinians. As stated in the letter of invitation to the Madrid Peace Conference of October 1991 and reaffirmed in repeated legal undertakings, most recently in the Trilateral Statement (25 July 2000) issued at the conclusion of the Camp David Peace Summit, the Middle East peace process is predicated upon direct bilateral negotiations between the parties concerned. Both Israeli and Palestinian leaders have agreed that 'their differences will be resolved only by good-faith negotiations'.

"The one-sided approach reflected in the resolution threatens to prejudge the outcome of this process, impede the progress of Israeli and Palestinian negotiators and undermine the prospects of achieving a just and lasting peace settlement. A comprehensive solution to the conflicts in the Middle East can only be based upon directly negotiated and mutually agreed solutions.

"Israel expresses its hope that the General Assembly will, in respect of the negotiations currently under way, offer its unwavering and impartial support for the peace process. This is especially important now, when the parties have made significant advances towards, and appear to be on the cusp of reaching, a final settlement."

Note verbale dated 7 November 2000 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

"General Assembly resolution 54/42 is the main political resolution on the Palestinian issue, and it was adopted by an overwhelming majority (149-3-2), a reflection of the strong convictions of the international community with regard to the content of the resolution. In addition, a similar text has been adopted by the Assembly over the past few years by overwhelming majorities, reflecting an established position of the international community. As stated in the Palestinian note of the fifty-fourth session, the resolution recalls several principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, provides support for the peace process and implementation of the agreements reached and also provides the basis for the just settlement of the question of Palestine, the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The resolution emphasizes as well the importance of a more active and expanded role for the United Nations in this process. As such, the resolution should serve as an acceptable basis for all parties to work on these important issues.

"Despite the agreement on the Sharm el-Sheikh Memorandum of 4 September 1999, which included an agreement on the implementation of a number of overdue prior commitments and an extension for the achievement of the final settlement between the two sides until 13 September 2000, Israel failed once again to implement most of the overdue provisions and commitments agreed upon in

Sharm el-Sheikh, including the third redeployment of its occupying forces, the release of Palestinian prisoners and the return of Palestinian displaced persons, and failed also to adhere to the agreed timetable.

"The optimistic expectations for a positive change in the status of the peace process in the Middle East and the conclusion of a final settlement between the Palestinian and Israeli sides have not been fulfilled. Unfortunately, we have witnessed a dramatic deterioration of the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, to an unprecedented level of aggression against the Palestinian people, including the use by the Israeli occupying forces of rockets fired from helicopter gunships, tanks, anti-tank missiles and the enforcement of a total military blockade around Palestinian towns and cities. The continued Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people has resulted in the killing of more than 160 Palestinians, as of 7 November 2000, and the injury of more than 3,000 people. One third of the Palestinians killed and injured have been children under the age of 18 years. In addition, there has been extensive destruction to the property and livelihood of the Palestinian people.

"The recent tragic events, which began on 28 September 2000, started with the mal-intentioned visit of the infamous Ariel Sharon to Al-Haram Al-Sharif, the first *qiblah* and the third of the holy sites of Islam, in Occupied East Jerusalem and then what followed the next day when the Israeli occupying forces stormed Al-Haram Al-Sharif and attacked the innocent worshippers. The Palestinian people saw all of this as a flagrant aggression against their holy places and as a prelude to other steps aimed at undermining their rights and possibly establishing other illegal realities by the occupying Power in Occupied East Jerusalem. In confronting this, the Palestinian people have expressed their rejection of these acts and their rejection of the occupation and their determination to defend their Islamic and Christian holy places and the Arab nature of East Jerusalem as well as their determination to achieve their natural rights, including the establishment of their independent State with Jerusalem as its capital.

"In response to the Palestinian protests, Israel, the occupying Power, has used its huge war machine to launch a bloody campaign of repression against our people, including a number of wilful killings and wilfully causing numerous serious injuries and great pain for Palestinian civilians. These Israeli actions and measures constitute grave and serious breaches of the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 1949, and some of these acts even constitute war crimes according to the Convention.

"The Security Council has dealt with the bloody events in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, with great seriousness. A large number of Member States, through their participation in the debate of the Council, added more importance and seriousness to the work of the Council. Following the debate of the Security Council, resolution 1322 (2000) of 7 October 2000 was adopted despite the numerous difficulties it faced. Resolution 1322 (2000) deplored the provocation carried out at Al-Haram Al-Sharif in Jerusalem on 28 September 2000 and the subsequent violence throughout the territories occupied by Israel since 1967, which have resulted in many Palestinian deaths and injuries. It also condemned acts of violence, especially the excessive use of force against Palestinians, and called for the immediate cessation of violence and for the establishment of a mechanism for a speedy and objective inquiry into the tragic events with the aim of preventing their repetition. The resolution also invited the Secretary-General to continue to follow the situation and to keep the Council informed.

"Despite the adoption of the resolution, however, the situation on the ground did not change and Israel, the occupying Power, did not comply with any of the provisions of the resolution. Instead, what followed was the dangerous Israeli escalation of its military campaign, including the shelling of some Palestinian locations in Ramallah and Gaza, which took place on 12 October and which were tantamount to a declaration of war against the Palestinian people.

"The Security Council was once again called upon to adopt an immediate resolution to

end the escalation and prevent the region as a whole from plunging into a widespread confrontation. Unfortunately, a permanent member of the Security Council declared inside the Council and outside the United Nations that it would use its right to veto any resolution regardless of its content. This clearly prevented the Security Council from exercising its responsibility and from taking any action. At that point, the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly resumed in accordance with the 'uniting for peace' formula to consider this dangerous situation and the 'illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory'. Resolution ES-10/7 was adopted by the tenth emergency special session on 20 October 2000. The resolution, inter alia, stresses the urgent need for providing protection for the Palestinian civilians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, condemns acts of violence, especially the excessive use of force by the Israeli forces against Palestinian civilians, calls for the reversal of all measures taken since 28 September 2000, and calls for the prevention of illegal acts of violence by Israeli settlers. The resolution supports also the establishment of a mechanism of inquiry into the tragic events as well as the efforts of the Secretary-General, including his efforts for the establishment of the committee of inquiry.

"In this context, we welcome the participation of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan, representing this international Organization in the Sharm el-Sheikh Summit, as well as all his efforts exerted during his visit to the region. We hope that this will lead to the effective participation of the United Nations in the mechanism of inquiry into what has happened, which was called for by Security Council resolution 1322 (2000) and agreed upon by the parties in Sharm el-Sheikh. We believe that the speedy establishment of this committee and its immediate work will have an effective impact on bringing an end to the situation created during the latest tragic events.

"It also remains indispensable for Israel, the occupying Power, to abide by and implement United Nations resolutions and agreements reached between the two sides, including the Sharm el-Sheikh understandings, in order for the situation to calm down and for negotiations to be resumed on the final status issues.

"In conclusion, the many principles and components of the important resolution entitled 'Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine', including principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, remain valid and essential in the search for a just and lasting solution to the decades-long question of Palestine. Respect for and adherence to such principles will surely assist the parties in arriving at a peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine."

II. Observations

5. At the Camp David Summit hosted by President Clinton last July, the quest for a lasting peace between Israel and the Palestinians reached a crucial stage. Though an overall agreement was not reached, for the first time the most difficult issues were seriously addressed. In a trilateral statement at the conclusion of the Summit the parties pledged to continue their efforts to conclude an agreement on all permanent status issues as soon as possible, to avoid violence and not to take unilateral actions.

6. However, subsequently, as is well known, the situation in the Middle East has become critical. Following a visit of the Leader of the Opposition in Israel, Ariel Sharon, to the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif in Jerusalem on 28 September, a new wave of protests and violence erupted in the occupied Palestinian territory and Israel in which so far more than 230 people, the vast majority of them Palestinians, have been killed and many others suffered injuries. Confrontations continue to mount and mutual mistrust is growing. This tragic situation has made abundantly clear to all sides that the cause of peace can only be damaged by excessive use of force, indiscriminate violence or terror.

7. The present crisis holds the potential for further escalation, with dangerous consequences for the entire region. It is therefore imperative that all efforts be made to curtail the current wave of violence and resume the peace process. The Israelis and the Palestinians know well that they have to live side by side with each other and must reconcile their

differences through dialogue and cooperation. The question is how to respond to the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people to personal dignity and national independence and to the legitimate security concerns of the Government of Israel.

8. This grave new situation in the Middle East has recently been the subject of extensive debates at the United Nations, and resulted in the adoption of resolution 1322 (2000) by the Security Council on 7 October 2000, and of resolution ES-10/7 by the General Assembly at its resumed tenth emergency special session on 20 October 2000. Also, on 19 October 2000, the Commission on Human Rights in Geneva, meeting at a special session, adopted a resolution on the current human rights situation of the Palestinian people.

9. In view of the escalation of tensions in the Middle East, I visited the region in October to explore urgent means to end the current cycle of violence and to revive the peace process. Over a period of 10 days, I had a series of meetings with Prime Minister Barak and President Arafat as well as with many other regional and international leaders.

10. On 16 and 17 October 2000, Presidents Mubarak and Clinton jointly chaired a Summit meeting in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, which was attended also by King Abdullah II of Jordan, Prime Minister Barak, President Arafat, Javier Solana of the European Union, and myself. The Summit produced understandings in three vital areas: on security cooperation and other measures to end the current confrontation, on a committee of fact-finding to inquire into the recent tragic events and how to prevent their recurrence, and on renewing the peace process. I briefed the Security Council and the General Assembly on 20 October on the outcome of the Summit and of my visit to the region.

11. On 7 November, as a follow-up to the Sharm el-Sheikh Summit, President Clinton announced the membership of the Fact-Finding Committee which was developed with the parties and in consultation with me. The committee is expected to provide an independent and objective review of the current crisis with the goal of preventing its recurrence. On 9 November, I met with the chairman of the committee, former United States Senator George Mitchell, and urged him to begin the committee's work as soon as possible.

12. I am concerned that the other understandings of the Sharm el-Sheikh Summit, set out in paragraph 10 above, remain unimplemented. I continue to follow developments closely and remain in touch with the parties and other international leaders. I believe that full and good-faith implementation by both sides of the understandings reached at Sharm el-Sheikh is vital to restore calm and to create the right atmosphere for the resumption of the peace talks. In my view there is no alternative to a return to the negotiating table. The two sides will in the end have to negotiate a peaceful settlement. The international community should continue its efforts to help them resolve the present crisis and to put the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations back on track.

13. On 12 and 13 November, I participated in the Summit of the Organization of the Islamic Conference in Doha, Qatar. The current crisis in the Middle East, in particular the ongoing violence, was a major topic of my discussions with Heads of State and Foreign Ministers. All of them expressed grave concern at the situation and many deplored the excessive use of force by Israel.

14. The present crisis has led to a serious deterioration of the humanitarian and economic situation in the occupied Palestinian territory. In order to improve the coordination of the United Nations humanitarian assistance to the Palestinians, a task force has been established chaired by the United Nations Special Coordinator in Gaza. Also, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), which has continued to deliver a wide range of basic services to the Palestine refugees despite severe financial constraints, has recently launched an urgent appeal for $39 million to fund a three-month contingency plan to buy food and medical supplies.

15. As the General Assembly has underscored on many occasions, achieving a final and peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine, the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict, is imperative for the attainment of a comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East. It is to be hoped that there will also be movement soon on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks so that peace, security and stability may be achieved for all peoples in the region on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

16. For its part, the United Nations will continue to support the resumption of the peace process and to respond in an integrated way to the economic, social,

humanitarian and other needs of the population in the West Bank and Gaza. I call upon the international community to provide the necessary resources in support of the United Nations programmes to address the deteriorating economic and humanitarian situation of the Palestinian people.

17. I should like to pay special tribute to Terje Roed-Larsen, United Nations Special Coordinator. Mr. Roed-Larsen gave me invaluable assistance during my recent peacemaking efforts in the region and will continue his important mission in the region.

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Fifty-fifth session
Agenda item 33
Culture of peace

Letter dated 22 November 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the pleasure to enclose the Amman Declaration on Peace Through Tourism adopted at the Global Summit on Peace Through Tourism held in Amman from 8 to 11 November 2000 (see annex). The Declaration welcomes the proclamation by the United Nations of the International Year for the Culture of Peace (2000) and the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010).

It is requested that the present letter and its annex be issued as a document of the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Anwarul Karim **Chowdhury**
Ambassador and Permanent Representative

00-75969 (E) 271100

Annex to the letter dated 27 November 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Amman Declaration
on
Peace Through Tourism

We the representatives and participants at the Global Summit on Peace Through Tourism, assembled in Amman, Jordan, from 8 to 11 November 2000...

...*recognize* that travel and tourism is a worldwide social and cultural phenomenon, engaging people of all nations as hosts and guests, and as such is one of humanity's truly global activities...

... and that travel and tourism is one of the world's largest and fastest growing industries, creating one in eleven jobs, contributing to international and regional economic growth, bridging disparities between developed and developing countries, and bringing prosperity which fosters peace...

... and that peace is an essential precondition for travel and tourism and all aspects of human growth and development...

... and the development of tourism as a global vehicle for promoting understanding, trust and goodwill among peoples of the world requires an appropriate political and economic framework

...Do hereby *declare* our commitment to building a Culture of Peace through Tourism, and support for the following principles:

1. That tourism is a fundamental human activity engaging social, cultural, religious, economic, educational, environmental, and political values and responsibilities.

2. That the right of people to travel is a fundamental human right which should be exercised without undue restriction including the facilitation of travel for those with disabilities and special needs.

3. That community livelihood should be enhanced and local cohesion encouraged and that all peoples and communities be recognized as being manifestations of a heritage.

4. That human differences be respected and cultural diversity celebrated, as a precious human asset and that peaceful relationships among all people be promoted and nurtured through sustainable tourism.

5. That historical monuments and land-marks be protected and where necessary restored and rehabilitated and made accessible to everyone as valuable assets for humanity and legacies for future generations.

6. That the preservation and wise use of the environment, and ecological balance, are essential to the future of tourism, and that ancient wisdoms of indigenous Peoples and care for the Earth be acknowledged and respected.

7. That the global reach of the tourist industry be utilized in promoting "dialogues on peace" and in bridging the have and have-not societies of the various regions of the world.

...and *acknowledge* the legacy of His Majesty The Late King Hussein of Jordan in laying the foundation of peace in the region and for his effort to make the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan "a land of peace" and a place of welcome for the peaceful traveler, the commitment of His Majesty King Abdullah II to strengthen and expand King Hussein's Legacy of peace; and to the Government and people of Jordan, for their hospitality and support and their generous contribution to the success of the conference.

...and *commend* the IIPT for giving scope to the vision of peace through tourism and for its untiring effort toward that end, and to the title sponsor and other sponsors and contributors, for advancing the cause of Peace through Tourism..

...and *welcome* the proclamation by the United Nations of the International Year for the Culture of Peace (2000) and the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010)

...and *commit* ourselves to the realization of the goals and objectives as enshrined in the United nations Declaration and Program of Action on a Culture of Peace adopted by the General Assembly on 13 September 1999 through our activities and initiatives.

Adopted at Amman 11 November 2000

May Peace prevail on Earth

United Nations A/55/641–S/2000/1114

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General Assembly
Fifty-fifth session
Agenda item 164
Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Security Council
Fifty-fifth year

Letter dated 22 November 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

At approximately 5.20 p.m. local time, at the peak of rush hour, a car bomb was detonated near a local bus on one of Hadera's main streets. The powerful explosion ripped through the bus and caused extensive damage to a number of shops nearby. Two Israeli civilians were killed in the attack and over 41 were wounded. This attack, the latest in an escalating series of bombings that have targeted Israeli citizens, comes just two days after the bombing of an Israeli school bus, an attack which claimed two lives and critically wounded several young children.

The Government of Israel holds the Palestinian Authority fully responsible for these attacks. The Palestinian leadership, which for weeks has incited their people to violence, and has released scores of terrorist prisoners convicted of perpetrating terrorist attacks against Israelis, has, in both word and deed, given a clear signal to extremist elements to carry out violent attacks aimed at claiming Israeli lives. Despite Israel's numerous warnings, the Palestinian Authority has failed to take the necessary actions that could have prevented these attacks.

The international community must bring its influence to bear on Chairman Arafat, and urge him to restrain terrorist elements operating in the areas under his control, resume security cooperation with Israel and put an immediate end to violent activities. This latest escalation of Palestinian terrorism gravely imperils our ability to bring about a return to peaceful negotiations.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 164, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yehuda **Lancry**
Permanent Representative

00-75963 (E) 221100